

SUNlite

Shedding some light on UFOlogy and UFOs

...the mere listing of unanswered puzzles is not equivalent to providing unanswerable arguments. Is it conceivable that all of the UFO reports can be due to mistakes and hoaxes? I think that it is conceivable, and not at all a rash suggestion. We know the "signal-to-noise ratio" in UFO studies is low, and there may be no signal at all.

Dr. William Hartmann - UFOs: A scientific Debate

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GO DIRECTLY TO UFO JAIL

DO NOT QUESTION
ANY UFOLOGICAL
THEORIES

DO NOT THINK
DO NOT DISBELIEVE
DO NOT WRITE ANYTHING
CONTRADICTING UFO PROPONENTS



Confessions of a sinister, stalking, lying Skeptic!

Anthony Bragalia has taken some time away from his Nitinol pursuits to post an article on-line referring to me as a "stalker". By using the term "stalked", he paints himself as a victim and it is an emotional appeal to have the UFO faithful support his research, which I have criticized as being flawed. The funny thing about it is, I only initiated communications with Bragalia once during this entire time but he continuously e-mails me whenever he posts anything on the Internet and challenges me to comment! Bragalia's e-mail exchanges tend to be abusive at times and I got a little fed up when he made some comments that crossed the line. I informed him that because of his article and these comments, I will no longer consider any e-mail exchanges between us private and not to expect it. Mr. Bragalia became quite upset and would no longer answer any questions about his Grant correspondence I had asked previously. There is a Grant story follow-up on page 14.

In Bragalia's article "exposing" me as an evil person, he simply rehashed his same old arguments about Nitinol and really did not address the problems I had pointed out. He also keeps repeating that I did not tell my readers everything. What Bragalia fails to mention is I put links in my newsletter for others to go to the source documents and read for themselves the information. Compare this to his writings, where sources are hardly ever listed and sometimes misrepresented. He even seemed proud that he deliberately misled his readers with the title of a document in order to deceive skeptics!

Since I find most of his claims about me ridiculous, I don't intend to waste much more space on the matter. He dared me to publish his article in this newsletter. I see no reason to waste the space reprinting the whole thing here but I will provide a link for everyone to go read it in the spirit of fairness. The reader can decide on what is fact and what is fiction.

In other news, I saw a piece on CNN involving Dr. Robert Feldman discussing how difficult it is to tell that people are lying. Since many UFOlogists and skeptics feel they can tell if somebody is lying or not, I was intrigued. Doctor Feldman, states it is not much more than chance. He adds that many people do not put forth the effort to suspect statements when people are saying what they want to hear. Last issue I stated, that if it sounded too good to be true, it probably isn't true. That should be the standard motto for anybody investigating UFOs.

One of my adventures this September involved visiting the Exeter UFO festival. After seeing the area in the center of town dominated by the UFO van and hot dog stand, my wife and I stuck our heads in to hear some of the lecture. I was not impressed with what I heard and my wife had no interest in listening to the rest of the story. Instead we went to the "debris field" area set up for kids. My grandson got to paint a rock and received a nice dragon painting on his arm. Meanwhile, I meandered around the area looking at all the garbage on the ground and trying to figure out what the UFO groups were trying to say with this little event. As best I could tell it was all about selling T-shirts

Cover: Photograph of ISS and Shuttle on 9/9/09. 30 second exposures each separated by 30 seconds and the stacked as one image. See page 7. for details about this event.

and hot dogs. If you wanted to listen to a lecture about UFOs, I guess you might have enjoyed it but many people are not going to want to sit in a hall and listen. These lectures are more preaching to the choir than public outreach. I have seen far superior work done at the NH Astronomical Society's Astronomy Day. At least the public learns something when they attend an astronomy day celebration.

Oh yes, LCROSS struck the moon and no alien invasion occurred because we smashed into their secret bases. I saw no comment from Peckman and others about it. Maybe they would do better promoting 2012 nonsense.

On a final note, I understand UFOlogist Mac Tonnies passed away just before this issue went on the net. I never met the man and really had no opinion of his work. I still regret his passing.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Who's blogging UFOs?.....	2-3
Did they really know what they saw?.....	4
The Roswell Corner.....	5-6
Amateur astronomers bust narrow field of view myth.....	6
Space Shuttle and ISS put on a UFO show..	7
Amateur astronomer busts ridicule myth.....	7
A very bright IFO.....	7
Understanding the "U" in UFO.....	8
Balloon inflates amateur astronomer's UFO report.....	9-10
CSI UFO: Are UFOlogists afraid of physical evidence? by Peter Merlin.....	11-13
Shiprock NM and the Allan Grant meteorite hunt of 1947.....	14-15
The Socorro case "definitively exposed"?	16-17
Implants anyone!? by Matt Graeber..	18-20
The cat and mice game by Matt Graeber	20-24
My true UFO story by Maj. Michael Hoza..	24
E-mails to the editor.....	25
UFOs on the tube.....	26
Buy it, borrow it, bin it.....	26

The Sacramento UFO examiner (Gregory Brewer) posted a great video he suggested was a UFO passing a commercial jet. All one has to do is look at the video and see that is an excellent example of a "sub-sun". Nothing new here but you wonder why these "examiners" don't even bother to check up on these things. To their credit, several who commented on this video noted it was a reflection of the sun. This makes you wonder about how critical the "examiner" is in evaluating "evidence".

This became obvious when he endorsed Dick Criswell's wild story that came right out of a science fiction show. The story is that large space battle cruisers (which carry smaller fighter craft) being covertly developed by the US by reverse engineering UFO technology. This sounds a lot like the show "Star-gate SG-1" and "Atlantis". The implications are that in 2010, there will be a global UFO event. Haven't we heard this story before? I wonder if the Axthadan's will up their timetable.....

Magonia's Pelican is back!!! I always enjoyed the Pelican's logic. He wondered about Richard Doty and if he was being told to tell these stories or was he doing it on his own. To be honest, I don't know but my guess is he was working on his own. Of course, I have to wonder about his superiors in that case. Maybe they weren't completely aware of what he was doing? I guess, only Doty knows for sure.

Devoid's Billy Cox seems confused about the Bill Games Roswell story. The story seems to be accepted by many in the UFO community every since Cox talked about it a few years ago. According to Games, he was General Craigie's pilot and flew him to Roswell in early July of 1947. Game's records for 1947 were unavailable to verify his claim. This did not seem to matter to some. Now Cox reveals that General Craigie's flight logs have been discovered and they show that he did not fly to Roswell in early July of 1947. The answer from Games is that he does not care and the records were probably altered! There are other possibilities. One could be that UFOlogists were snookered AGAIN! They should use the

Who's blogging UFOs?

Hot topics and varied opinions



rule of thumb that if it sounds too good to be true, it probably isn't.

The UFO Iconoclasts published Anthony Bragalia's expose' on the Zamora incident. Bragalia's evidence revolves around a letter written from Dr. Stirling Colgate to Dr. Linus Pauling. I found the letter interesting but not enough to write an article about. Bragalia chose to pursue it and produced a highly speculative article based on some e-mail exchanges he had with Dr. Colgate. Because it required me to document the events, I moved it from here to an article on page 16.

The UFO Examiner continues to provide us with the greatest news from MUFON. The first highlight was the story about the Aliens coming down to Georgia. However, they did not appear to be looking for anything special. The story comes from a woman, who stated she saw three grays when she got up to use the community bathroom in a campground around 4AM. The story ended with her running back to her tent to see her husband. She stated that she knows what she saw was real. I am not sure why she was so concerned. After all, aren't alien grays allowed to take a camping trip as well?

There was another "gray" sighting in Washington. The aliens, like bigfoot, are being seen by casual observers. How long, before we get to see plaster casts of gray footprints?

In another case, a twelve-year old taking some pictures of a UFO with her cell phone. Her mother submitted the report and pictures. A MUFON investigator stepped in and declared the photographs a hoax! MUFON better be careful, they are questioning the integrity of a mother and her child. I thought only mean skeptics and debunkers dare challenge the integrity of a witness.

Marsh also posted a "new" video of the Phoenix lights. They looked like lights in the distance, which changed formation. My first thought was Chinese lanterns. It turned out the video was from a 2008 event, which involved somebody floating road flares underneath helium balloons. So much for it being a "new" video.

Probably the most interesting report I read came from somebody describing a UFO seen by amateur astronomers on October 17th. This led me to discover that NASA had a research balloon up at the time. A check of MUFON's database revealed a host of UFO reports in New Mexico and Texas. See page 9 for details!

The Wichita paranormal examiner described a UFO that was filmed during the July solar Eclipse in China. This was not news but it was repeated on many blogs over the last few months. When I saw the clip I was not that impressed. The video showed some old lady and a young man demonstrating how they took their pictures, which appeared to be taken during daylight and not during the totality of a solar eclipse. However, we had a twist to the story because it was supposedly recorded by the Purple Mountain Observatory for forty minutes as well. It was stated that the scientists are not going to reveal what they learned about this event for a year. It sounded mysterious and a lot like a cover-up. However, somebody on the Above Top Secret forum seemed to have hit on where the confusion lay. They

Who's blogging UFOs? (Cont'd)

determined that two stories were mixed up in translation and the observatory had recorded some coronal activity during the eclipse that would require studying for a year. Sure enough, the China daily talked to the director of the observatory and he was shocked by the news that it was reported they saw a UFO. He explained they had recorded bright spots near the sun's limb, which probably had something to do with the corona and nothing to do with UFOs. Still it got a lot of blog time on the internet. Not to accept a conventional explanation, Michael Cohen claimed it was a classic case of a cover-up/debunking effort. Cohen also added that UFOs often show up at total solar eclipses! I guess all the astronomers keep missing them. Is this kind of nonsense predictable or what?

Michael Cohen's comedy blog is continuing to lecture us about the coming revelations in UFOlogy. He presented another smoking gun video shot in August of 2008 from India. According to Cohen, the video was "extra-ordinary". Looking at the clips he posted, all I saw was somebody showing images of an out-of-focus point source, like a star or planet (Jupiter was quite prominent at the time). If this is the "smoking gun", I wonder if this is not a different kind of smoke we are probably talking about and it does not come out of a gun.

Cohen also described a UFO incident from Florida where a man saw 4 aliens crossing a road. He related it to a recent case where a person died in an automobile accident. The poor man told people before he died that he lost control when he saw an alien/creature crossing the road! I guess that these two events may be related to the age old question of, "Why the Alien crossed the road?" (note: this link is now dead)

Another Cohen revelation is all about how the Axthadans are going to destroy humanity and the Earth if we don't fix our ways. Cohen goes on to say that this is for the good of "universal harmony". Does Cohen actually believe all this stuff he writes? It makes for good science fiction reading but his reasoning is definitely "out of this world".

Last month Cohen said there was a secret

UFO base in South America. Now we learn that there is also one in Siberia! I guess the Axathadan's have bases everywhere on earth. Maybe there is one below my house as well!

Finally, Cohen jumped into the "Moscow halo" story. For those not familiar with the event, it was a hole punch cloud formation. However, Cohen says it was a vortex/stargate where UFOs can enter/exit. Why can't UFO proponents accept likely explanations for these events?

Not to be outdone, Seattle exopolotics examiner Alfred Lambremont Webre reports posting a video of a ET inter dimensional vehicle! He gives us the details from somebody who is called Jon Kelly. According to the entry, Kelly is a "reverse speech expert"! That impressed me (not) and gave credibility to the report (well maybe to somebody else). Kelly states, "*At approximately 9:15pm on Saturday September 12, 2009 night I observed a large, high altitude luminous object traveling from west to east across the night sky over Vancouver. The sighting lasted for less than two minutes.*" I watched the video which only showed the object for a few seconds. I saw a star-like object gliding eastward towards the constellation of Cassiopea and then it vanished. Luckily, we have location, time, and date. So, a quick check of "Heavens above" and we got a pretty good match. Of course, the suspect is always the ISS and on 12 September At 9:26 PM Vancouver time the ISS was visible to the residents of British Columbia. It was a brilliant magnitude -2.8 and went into shadow as it approached Cassiopea pretty much the same way I saw in the video. Can we call this one solved? I think so.

Matt Graeber pointed me towards an interesting website called worldufo.space. I guess it is a UFO version of "My space". I saw some video clips that were just lights in the sky. I don't know if they were satellites, the ISS, Venus, airplanes, or martian cruisers. There was no data associated with the videos to draw such a conclusion. I wasn't that impressed though.

Forgotomori gets a mention this issue for his revelations about the UFO viral video wave in late September/early Oc-

tober. When I saw the first video, my first reaction was that it was probably a CGI hoax. It was too good to be true and it was. It was a campaign by a group called "Terra Spain" and it was an homage to Orson Welles War of the Worlds broadcast. I really liked seeing the alien come out of the little saucer. Enjoy Kentaro's summary of the story.

While this is not a blog entry, I did receive an e-mail from Ken Lima concerning all sorts of Roswell fragments that have been found. According to this website and e-mail, all sorts of testing is being done on these fragments that supposedly came from the crashed spaceship. Ken states he exchanged a piece of meteorite (a verified extraterrestrial fragment) for one of these pieces, which were being sold at a UFO expo. Were they right next to the T-shirts? I guess it is not that valuable if you can exchange meteorites for them. IMO, Ken got taken! Looking at the pics, I can't tell if they are just old pieces of metal or alien I-beams. They certainly don't appear to have the characteristics described by the witnesses (Metal springing back into shape, alien writing, or indestructible metal). I can't even figure out how these gentlemen determined they were from 1947! I told Ken to e-mail me back when they have properly tested the fragments and prove they came from a spaceship.

A news item that was missed by most UFO blogs was an announcement by the USAF that they were going to be using aerial flares on the Arizona test range. For years, I have heard UFOlogists demand that the USAF demonstrate what aerial flares look like so they could see for themselves. Well, the USAF made their announcement for October 8th but the UFOlogists did not appear to record the operations or mention it. Is this any surprise?

A last minute item was the discovery of an object in a 31-day orbit around the earth discovered by astronomers looking for near-earth objects (NEOs). The present theory is that it is a leftover from the Apollo program. I wonder why these same astronomers can't image those motherships that are approaching or are in orbit around the earth?

And the beat goes on.....

Did they really know what they saw?

James Fox recent program on the History Channel ("I know what I saw") was an emotional appeal for the viewer to trust all these witnesses regarding their UFO experiences. However, Mr. Fox really did not present the evidence fairly. I am sure the witnesses all believe they saw something extraordinary but, all too often, the witnesses can be mistaken. In order to set the record straight and present the rest of the story, I think it would be a good idea to provide Internet links that show "the other side of the coin".

1. The Arizona UFOs started the program. One should examine my web page on the subject. When I looked at the case back in 1997, I discovered that most of the witnesses initially just reported lights flying overhead and very few reported seeing a massive flying "V" object. Fox did not show the video of the "V" for very long because it showed motion between the lights revealing the witnesses, who reported a massive craft were wrong.
2. The Stephenville incident was presented as good evidence. I am fairly confident that most of the sightings were related to two groups of F-16s which flew through the area.
3. The Hudson Valley UFOs were also mentioned. Aaron Sakulich gives us the explanation most skeptics find compelling. One photograph, shown of the lights from Southbury, CT in 1987, did not even happen during the events of Hudson Valley. James Easton on the defunct UFO research list (UFORL) pointed out this photograph looked a lot like some hoaxed UFO photos from Nashville.
4. The 1952 Washington DC radar case was presented as well. "Uncle Phil" had a nice response in SUN #52! Of course, the CAA report was never mentioned.
5. Other cases discussed included the Teheran incident and JAL 1628 UFO. These cases are covered extensively on the internet by the proponents. Most skeptics refer to Phil Klass' articles on these cases for another point of view.
6. The COMETA report was presented

as if it were the holy grail. According to Claude Mauge', it was not an official investigation and was created by a private organization. One of COMETA's prize cases was flight 3532 over Paris on 28 Jan 1994. The article in the January/February 2009 issue of *Skeptical Inquirer* by David Rossoni, Eric Maillot, and Eric De'Guillaume (UFOs: An assessment of thirty years of official studies in France), discussed this case to some extent. Patrick Gross points out that the "radar confirmation" is far from convincing.

7. Another important case presented from the COMETA report had to do with physical evidence from GEPAN's investigation of the Trans-en-Provence event. Eric Malloit's article in French is very critical of the investigation. If you can't read French, I suggest the book *UFOs: 1947-1997* or you can read a summary in SUN #46.
8. The Belgium UFOs made an appearance as well. While I have a website on the subject, there are many other skeptical opinions out there. Some are listed on my webpage but it goes without saying that there are far more plausible explanations out there than alien spaceships.
9. Fox spent a great deal of time discussing all the MOD documents that have been disclosed. According to Nick Pope, these documents show reliable people reporting unknown craft in British airspace. I think David Clarke did a thorough job of presenting the real story for the March 2009 and August 2009 releases. In a final bit of irony, the show displayed a bunch of documents from the March 30-31 mass sighting of a UFO. This was caused by a Russian booster rocket re-entry and had been explained long ago.
10. Rendlesham was another major case presented. Ian Ridpath's web page on the subject should be required reading. Ian even addresses the erroneous claims made by Nick Pope about the radiation levels. Dr. Clarke writes that the MOD documents about the case show the genesis of

a UFO myth.

11. We also got to see some fancy radar tapes when Fox presented the Channel Islands UFO. Nobody has a good explanation for what was reported but the most thorough on-line document is that written by David Clarke, Paul Fuller, Jean-Francois Baure, and Martin Shough. I think the way the event was presented on the program was very misleading. David Clarke commented to me, *"On the Channel Islands incident the ground-to-air chatter was played to emphasise the section where ATC mention obtaining a radar contact - which sounds impressive when played out of context. What wasn't mention was the fact that ATC were convinced the 'contact' was a weather return, and its position did not correspond to the visual sighting by the pilot, Ray Bowyer"*.
12. Fox spent a lot of time parading clips of J. Allen Hynek pontificating about UFOs. Hynek's claim to fame had everything to do with being the scientific consultant to Project Bluebook. Major Quintanilla's opinion about his behavior during his tenure was far from complementary. Go to chapter 12 of his manuscript. Quintanilla's opinions are his but they do provide some interesting light on the apparent behavior and motivations of UFOlogy's "Galileo".
13. Astronaut Gordon Cooper looked rather lethargic in his description of his UFO case. He described an event at Edwards AFB, where a UFO landed and then took off. This was all recorded on film, which, according to Fox and Cooper, was never seen again. James Oberg says this is not true and the sighting took place on 3 May 1957. All the frames shot are located in the bluebook files (case #4715) and it was identified as a balloon.
14. Finally, Jimmy Carter was once again presented. Robert Sheaffer demonstrated this was more than likely Venus.

As one can see, most of what Fox presented had potential explanations that he refused to reveal. Instead of an unbiased discussion of the evidence, it was the standard UFO propaganda designed to tug at the viewers desire to believe in the extraordinary.

The Roswell corner

Dr. Linus Pauling associated with Nitinol and Roswell?

This is another one of Anthony Bragalia's shock pieces. I can go on for pages but let's hit the high points:

1. Bragalia claims that Pauling had a "massive" UFO library. Looking at the on-line catalogue of his personal library, he had **only** five books that directly discussed UFOs (out of over 4000 books), which is far from "massive". Even the author of the Pauling Blog described his collection as "small". When I asked about this, Bragalia stated that he was told by Dr. Robert Paradowski that Pauling had the entire collection of Bluebook reports. Those are not listed in his personal library and I have to wonder if what we are talking about are the special reports, which combined are not that large (#14 had many pages but the others were only about 30 pages in length). When I e-mailed Dr. Paradowski on the subject, he stated that he DID NOT have a massive collection and his interest in the subject was "mild". Most of the books listed are from 1966 or 1968. There are no books/Manuscripts by Keyhoe, NICAP, or APRO. It appears that Pauling was intrigued and was trying to learn about the subject. One of the UFO proponent books had lots of skeptical remarks about checking facts and questioning what was written. According to the author of the Pauling Blog, *"As can be expected, claims that defied conventional science readily drew Pauling's criticism."* Dr. Paradowski also stated Pauling was skeptical, at times, about UFOs. The most worn book appeared to be the Condon Study, which was not marked by Pauling. Did this mean Pauling felt the Condon study was an adequate evaluation of the UFO issue? One would think he would have marked

up the book heavily (the same way he marked up the other UFO book) if he disagreed with its conclusions.

2. Bragalia implies that Pauling may have been involved in UFO research for the US government. A two page outline for a scientific study of UFOs, dated July 16, 1966 is the evidence presented. Pauling had typed in "Confidential" on the top. During the summer of 1966, the USAF was looking for a top level scientist independent of the UFO question and a high profile University to study the UFO problem. This would eventually fall on Dr. Edward Condon and the Colorado University. Pauling was located in California at the time but not teaching at any University. It is possible he might have been contacted about heading the study by another university or heard about it "through the grapevine". This document is probably his ideas on the subject and how he would approach the problem.
3. Pauling had inserted a letter from 1968 to the NM institute of Mining and Technology president Stirling Colgate in the pages of the UFO book Flying Saucers: Serious Business by Frank Edwards. Pauling was asking about the Zamora incident (see page. 16). Bragalia states the letter was found in the pages, which mention the Roswell story. However, we have no evidence if this is true. If it was, we have to wonder if Pauling put it there because of Roswell or just because the page is the first page in the chapter that talks about physical evidence? This is one of the links Bragalia makes to Pauling with Roswell.
4. The final link is a letter sent to Pauling by Dr. Clyde Williams of the Battelle Memorial Institute. This is Bragalia's centerpiece. According to Bragalia, it implies that Dr. Williams was an old friend and it indicates ties to Battelle and Shape Memory Alloy (SMA) research. Actually, the letter talks about Pauling visiting old friends and not specifically that Williams was an old friend. The reason Pauling went to Battelle was to give a single lecture and nothing more. Pauling spent less than a day at Battelle on February 7, 1951. He

rarely had any communications with Williams or anybody at Battelle after that. There are no indications he ever spent any significant time communicating with Center, Craig, Fawn, or Eastwood, who are Bragalia's key scientists for SMAs and Roswell. His research notebooks seem to be blank regarding SMAs as well. There is little to indicate that Pauling was involved with Battelle in any significant way. There are certainly no indications he knew anything about a crashed spaceship.

Bragalia told me that Pauling "died UFO/ET obsessed" but you won't find any evidence of this in his papers and Dr. Paradowski denies this was the case. His involvement with Battelle and UFOs was minimal. Dr. Pauling, who was very opinionated on everything controversial, was not the kind of individual who would keep this secret. Suggesting he was involved in such a conspiracy based on some vague connections is not giving the man the respect he deserves.

Ramey Memo exposed???

Barry Greenwood has his UFO historical review back on line and his latest issue has a lot to do with the infamous "Ramey Memo". Through some interesting research, which including using some old 3D glasses, he has come to the conclusion that the document is nothing more than a news wire. This was his conclusion before but it was dismissed as inconsistent with what people were reading in the "memo". He now has discovered that one line mentions what appears to be the words "Warren Haught Public relations officer". The misspelling of Haut's name existed in several news stories from the time period. Additionally, Walter Haut's name would probably not be misspelled in a classified memo and definitely not the same way the media misspelled it. If this is accurate, then the whole Ramey memo secret message story is closed. To throw gasoline on the fire, Kevin Randle posted the story on his blog. If you recall, when he discussed the memo before it gathered a great many comments pro and con. Nothing has changed. The lines were still drawn as the defenders of the memo made the same claims about people not looking at the photograph

The Roswell corner (cont'd)

and characters correctly. David Rudiak, in his typical fashion, posted an extensive rebuttal in the comments section. His commentary was also laced with some barbed words towards skeptics and proponents who have not accepted his interpretation of the memo. To him, they are "logically challenged". It is my observation that both groups are trying to decipher the document from different points of view. There is nothing wrong or "illogical" about doing this. One might even consider it "scientific" to look at it from a different perspective. After all, what has looking at it from the conspiracy point of view accomplished?

For the most part, I think Mr. Greenwood has done a commendable job at presenting a new interpretation of the squiggly lines in the photograph. This interpretation may not be correct but seems more consistent with what we might expect from a General, who is holding a press conference. Of course, one might be able to resolve the issue if UFOlogists flipped the bill for that study Randle/Houran proposed some time ago. Then again, maybe UFOlogists don't want the problem resolved at all.

James Bond Johnson interviews on-line.

Kevin Randle decided to post the lengthy interviews and contradictions associated with James Bond Johnson. This is really nothing new but it gives some details into all those stories being told over the past few years. I am not even sure what to make of Mr. Johnson's stories in later years. One can probably expect the initial interviews being closest to what he tried to accurately recall before contamination became an issue.

Marcel story redux

Kevin Randle also went over the changing testimony of Jesse Marcel Sr. over the years. In early interviews and in the film, "UFOs are real", Marcel stated that some of the debris was seen in the photographs. When it was pointed out to him it was standard balloon debris, Marcel then started stating that it was not the debris he picked up. Most interest-

ing is the interview Marcel gave to Linda Corely, where he stated, the debris was in the photographs but it was underneath the balloon debris and brown wrapping paper.

When "Lance" asked Kevin Randle if the Marcel photo ever appeared in the Roswell Daily Record, Randle replied it was on the front page of the July 10 edition. Lance then pointed out that at the time of the early interviews, Marcel probably recalled his appearance in the paper and remembered this as the real debris. One can then take this to the next step where Marcel decided to change his story once he saw the photographs and they did not show any spaceship debris. Of course, you won't hear Randle or others suggest this possibility. Instead, they choose to take the later statements as accurate and the earlier statements as misquotes or foggy memories by Marcel. Like most things associated with Roswell, the truth will never be known and there is always some sort of wiggle room for those trying to push the crashed spaceship scenario.

Roswell Chaplain added to crashed spaceship mix.

Anthony Braglia's new revelation has to do with a Baptist Chaplain stationed at Roswell in early July 1947. According to Braglia, the chaplain was relieved by a Catholic Chaplain on 10 July 1947 and then sent to the Pacific somewhere. He states it was sudden and without warning but provides no evidence to confirm this. I am curious as to how long the Chaplain had been stationed at Roswell before this. Could it be that it was just a normal transfer? It seems unlikely that just a few days after the debris was supposedly recovered that a Catholic Chaplain would magically materialize all the way from New Jersey without some prior planning. However, it is Roswell and anything is considered possible no matter how unlikely. I think I would want to see some better evidence than Braglia's say so since my past experience has been that he tends to leave important details out. Maybe in his next expose on me, he can scan the documents and present them for all to examine.

Amateur astronomers bust narrow field of view myth

Over the past two issues I discussed some popular UFO myths about amateur astronomers. One most often repeated is that they are too busy looking through the narrow field of their telescope eyepiece to see any UFOs. My main argument has been that, when in groups, amateur astronomers rarely miss large obvious objects that are visible in the sky. On September 19th, I was able to demonstrate this to be true. On that date, Wallops Island, Virginia launched a rocket into the upper atmosphere, which created quite a spectacle.

My local astronomy club held a group observing session (called the fall Messier Marathon) at a local dark sky site. I did not attend and, instead, went to the local observatory site to do some astrophotography. When I arrived around sunset, there was nobody present. As per my usual routine, I took about an hour to set up my scope and camera equipment. I did not notice anything unusual in the sky because of what I was doing. However, things were different at the group session. Around 7:45 PM EDT, many noticed the light low in the southwest, which rapidly turned into an expanding cloud. The entire event only lasted about a minute and the cloud rapidly dissipated. The initial event was about as bright as first magnitude star. I was also informed that many amateur astronomers saw the event from star parties in Pennsylvania and Connecticut.

Last month I stated that an amateur would have to be oblivious to everything around him to miss a UFO of sufficient brightness. Based on what I was doing, I was very focused (I would not want to damage my expensive gear) and missed this short event. Therefore, I will concede that when an amateur astronomer is alone and distracted, it is possible for a UFO event to be missed if it is of very short duration and not excessively bright. This is not the case for the group gatherings. The collective observation coverage and the overall sky knowledge makes it extremely like that minor events will be noticed and, usually, identified. With all of these group gatherings happening on a regular basis, isn't it a bit odd that none report seeing any of these unidentified craft that defy explanation?

Space shuttle and ISS put on a UFO show

I was excited to go out on the evening of September 9th to watch the space shuttle and ISS make a pass overhead. The sky was not clear and there was some scattered cirrus clouds. As a result, I chose to set my camera to get a shot in the northeast near the tree line where the sky was clear. As predicted, the shuttle came into view over the western horizon with the ISS not far behind. As the shuttle passed overhead and brightened to about -2, I noticed it was surrounded by a hazy cloud. I thought it was possibly associated with the shuttle or it could have been the light from the shuttle seen through the cirrus layer. As both moved towards the northeast, the cloud around the shuttle dissipated. Because of my prepositioning the camera and the reasonably short visibility of the cloud feature, I missed a chance to record it.

The next day, I read on Spaceweather.com that the shuttle was conducting waste water dumps about the time I saw

this event. This explained the cloud like feature I observed. After a few days, I became curious about how inexperienced observers might have recorded the event. All it took was to look at the MU-FON database to see some of the observations. For September 9th, I saw seven that seemed to be associated with the shuttle/ISS pass.

- Observer saw each object exhibit different colors. The observer's companion saw it explode. Observer proclaimed that had seen shuttle/satellite flybys before but these were too large and too slow. Companion became hysterical and he had to calm her down.
- Observer correctly identified it as the shuttle but chose to file a UFO report anyway.
- Observer mixes two events over two nights. She reports one night being a single light and another being two

lights. Was elated after the two light event but felt moody after the single light event.

- Observer described venting as "Nike swoosh" symbol
- Observer saw two objects chasing each other and determined they were below the clouds (sky partly cloudy). Times given match the time for ISS/Shuttle pass. Probably saw both through thin clouds (I have seen this happen when the ISS is bright).
- They were so focused on the two objects as they approached the dock, their boat hit some small rocks.
- The two UFOs were "spiraling" and left a "comet like tail".

Some did not list times but the observations were consistent with the shuttle and ISS making a pass. This is nothing new. People are just not very informed about what is visible in the night sky.

Amateur astronomer busts ridicule myth

On July 19th, amateur astronomer, Anthony Wesley imaged a dark spot near Jupiter's south polar region. Jupiter's cloud patterns tend show dark spots over the years and, normally, it would mean nothing. However, Wesley felt this was not just some cloud pattern in the region. He announced that something had struck Jupiter. This was a bold claim that, if incorrect, might make Mr. Wesley appear as an amateur eager to make headlines. It would also open him to some ridicule.

I looked at the claim somewhat skeptically. In all of the centuries of Astronomy, only one impact event has ever been definitely observed. Sure it was a new feature but could it really be an impact event? Dr. Plait voiced similar skepticism on his blog. However, images from the Infrared Telescope in Hawaii revealed it was an impact event. Dr. Plait reversed himself stating he was glad to be wrong as was I. Mr. Wesley, who could have been the subject of ridicule, now was the discoverer of something truly exotic.

Too many UFOlogists resort to claiming that amateur astronomers will not reveal any observations of exotic craft because

of fear of ridicule. Mr. Wesley is just another example of this not being true. Experienced amateur astronomers understand the night sky very well and to suggest they are going to simply ignore something truly exotic and not report it, is just another UFO myth.



I took this image of the dark spot on the morning of July 26th under poor conditions. The white spot on the right is Europa. The dark spot is at the bottom left is the impact mark.

A very bright IFO

A very bright fireball (brighter than the full moon) exploded over the Ontario area on September 25, 2009 at 9:03 PM, which produced some meteorites. There was a spectacular video on line at Spaceweather.com. These all-sky cameras are a great thing. I just wonder why they don't record any of these massive UFOs everyone else is reporting.

Once again, I decided to look at the MU-FON sighting database. It had two reports. One witness remarked, *I have seen shooting stars, I can promise this was not one of those. It could have been a meteorite or "space junk" or whatever, but the 4 points I saw distinctly and at night seemed to not just be a piece of random junk.* As is common with bright fireballs, the witnesses often have no experience with them. They sometimes try and rationalize that they have seen meteors before and what they saw was very different. Of course it was different. A bright fireball/bolide is a rare and spectacular event. In all my years of astronomical experience, I have seen only about a dozen outside of regular meteor showers. When they get bright enough to cast shadows, they are truly spectacular. If only more people read Spaceweather.com.

Understanding the “U” in UFO

An unidentified flying object (UFO, pronounced OOFo) is here defined as the stimulus for a report made by one or more individuals of something seen in the sky (or an object thought to be capable of flight but when landed on the earth) which the observer could not identify as having an ordinary natural origin, and which seemed to him sufficiently puzzling that he undertook to make a report of it to police, to government officials, to the press, or perhaps to a representative of a private organization devoted to the study of such objects.¹

By this definition we can all agree that UFOs are real! However, do not misunderstand what I am saying. UFOs are real because people report seeing “objects” in the sky they think are “flying” and they can not identify. Far too many UFO proponents attempt to link “unidentified” with alien spaceships. They do this by stating because the event can not be logically explained, then they must be something “not of this earth/exotic in nature” causing the event.

The whole problem with the “unidentified” label is that, as Condon correctly stated, it is the witness, who determines it is unidentifiable at the time of the event. Exactly what the observer uses to classify it as such is based on their experience and their perception of what they are seeing. That perception can be heavily biased by what the observer wants to see. For instance, in the case of the Zond IV incident, several people felt re-entering space debris was some sort of rocket ship with windows. No such thing was visible but this is what they perceived and wanted to believe was an accurate description of the event. This is the biggest problem with the “unidentified” label and it has perplexed UFOlogists to the present day.

I could reiterate the old “eyewitness reliability” arguments but I am not going to waste the space. Instead, I think the recent frustrations of Peter Davenport at the National UFO reporting center (NUFORC) seem to have reinforced this point. NUFORC is being overwhelmed with UFO reports. Peter has become frustrated by having to clean up the UFO reporter’s inability to follow simple instructions (like filling out an on-line form correctly) and with the observer’s inability to identify the UFOs they are reporting! His remarks are very telling:

We are receiving hundreds of reports every month of normal, terrestrial events,

e.g. over-flights of the International Space Station, the Space Shuttle, or satellites; “flares” of light from “Iridium” satellites; the appearance of typical meteors; and observations of normal, “twinkling” stars, planets, contrails, clusters of balloons, etc....I am flabbergasted by what people report to our Center as “UFO’s,” which are nothing more than objects, or events, of normal, terrestrial, origin, and which are in no way related to alien craft from other parts of the galaxy or Universe, which appear to us to visit our planet on a somewhat regular basis.²

Is it any surprise that these observers, which UFOlogists tend to trust implicitly when they report exotic sounding craft, are having difficulty identifying mundane objects in the sky? Perhaps one needs to rethink the reliability of the reports being filed. However, you can not blame the witnesses. They just don’t understand the sky. Many want to know what they saw even though they sometimes don’t like the answer. According to Peter:

I believe the majority of time I spend on the Hotline is devoted to trying to convince people who have been staring for hours at a star or planet that the object of interest is not a UFO!!³

Davenport adds that 80-90% of these reports are not related to UFOs at all. Of course, Peter is missing the point that the observers can not identify these objects, which means they **are** UFO related. Just because he can identify them, does not mean the observers can.

Because of all this identification work and dealing with mundane reports, Peter has set out some guidelines to those who want to file a UFO report:

Consequently, before you telephone our Hotline, or submit a written report to our Center via our Online Report Form, please first make at least a minimal effort to determine whether what you observed might have been something normal, and not UFO-related.⁴

Apparently, this problem is really affecting Mr. Davenport. At the time of this writing, he is almost two months behind on filing UFO reports into the database. Perhaps he should take on a different job or just

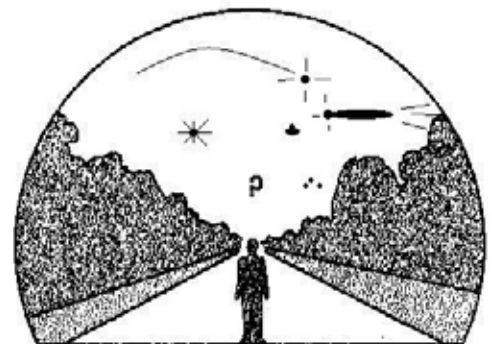
place the stuff up without any editing the way MUFON apparently does.

Instead, Davenport has decided the best way to resolve the issue is to make sure that people check various websites like “Heavens-Above” prior to filling out a UFO report. If they have difficulty filling out the form, what luck are they going to have try to figure out if they saw an Iridium satellite or not?

I have something better to suggest. All people, who are interested in looking up at the sky should go to a local astronomy club skywatch and ask questions one-on-one with some people who know how to explain what they are seeing to them. Nothing beats the “hands on” approach when it comes to understanding the night sky. It will open their eyes to what is really “out there” and not what they think is “out there”. The easiest way to eliminate the “U” from a UFO is to improve the observer’s level of knowledge about the sky and to enlighten them on how to describe their observations in terms that can be properly evaluated.

Notes and references

1. Condon, E. U., et al., eds. Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects. New York: Bantam 1968. p. 9.
2. Davenport, Peter. National UFO Reporting Center statement. August 30, 2009. WWW. Available at: <http://www.nuforc.org/Statement090830.html>
3. *ibid*
4. *ibid*.



Balloon inflates amateur Astronomer's UFO report

In the second issue of SUNlite (Vol. 1 No. 2), I had addressed a UFO report from an amateur astronomer associated with the Tulsa Astronomy Club. A few checks revealed that the source was a low earth orbit rocket body. Imagine my surprise when a second UFO report appeared from the same location on October 17th.

I was intrigued and e-mailed the observatory's director and the club's observing chairperson. Rather than discuss it with me (perhaps out of frustration), one or both forwarded my e-mail to the individual, who made the report. I was not that surprised to discover he was the same person that filed the May UFO report. He e-mailed me and told me in no uncertain terms that his latest sighting was definitely an "unknown" that could not be explained. I was somewhat disappointed in his attitude when I "floated" the possible solution for his latest report.

It just so happens that NASA was conducting its fall research balloon testing in New Mexico. Not surprisingly, one was launched on October 17th. As usually is the case, it sparked UFO reports in New Mexico and Texas. One report even included digital photographs of the research balloon! NASA terminated the flight at 0104Z on the 18th of October and it landed northwest of Lubbock, Texas roughly 370 miles away from the Mounds observatory. IMO, this was a good source for his UFO and mentioned it to him.

The UFO reporter found my explanation less than desirable and gave me all sorts of reasons why it could not be a research balloon. Despite my efforts to demonstrate why I thought it was plausible, he refused to listen and terminated any further communications. I will list his arguments (as well as other potential arguments) and explain why they do not eliminate the research balloon as the source.

1. The object was due west, while Lubbock is to the southwest. Actually, I am not sure if his observation was due west. Without a marker of some kind it is almost impossible in a twilight sky to indicate "due west" (azimuth of 270 degrees). Not until Polaris is visible can one even pin-

point due north without a marker of some kind. Most people rely on where the sun set for a direction of west. The sun set at an azimuth of about 258 degrees that night. If this was his marker for "due west" then he was off by 12 degrees of azimuth. The actual azimuth from the observatory to where the research balloon was at the time was 250-255 degrees. It is interesting this sighting line crosses Oklahoma City, which is a direction the observer indicated the UFO was located in his initial report.

2. Lubbock is too far away. As best I could measure the distance from the balloon's terminal phase and the observatory was roughly 370-390 miles. This is far away but, if the balloon's altitude was between 20 and 26 miles, the balloon would appear about 3-4 degrees above the horizon for observers at the observatory (not taking into account refraction). Interestingly, one of his companions computed the distance and altitude and told him the UFO was at 23,000 feet 83 miles away. This is roughly 3 degrees above the horizon.

3. A balloon of this size should have been larger when viewed through the scope. The witness described the angular size of the object as about the size of Jupiter, which is around 40-50" of arc. A 450 foot balloon 370-390 miles away is roughly 45-48" of arc.

4. The time is incorrect. This was my error. I originally interpreted the 0104Z time as being 7:04 PM CDT and stated the balloon was descending rapidly about this time. He countered that he saw it until around 7:45 PM. Zulu time, like UT, takes into account DST. As a result 0104Z is actually 8:04 PM CDT.

5. The UFO went up in his field of view. He did not argue this but his report states it. Anyone familiar with telescopes, will recognize that the image is inverted. This means, when something goes in the upward direction, it is physically going down towards the horizon.

6. The UFO showed no motion for a long period of time. It just so happens the balloon was pretty stationary until it descended. While in the stratosphere, it's motion was ESE and ENE towards the observatory and

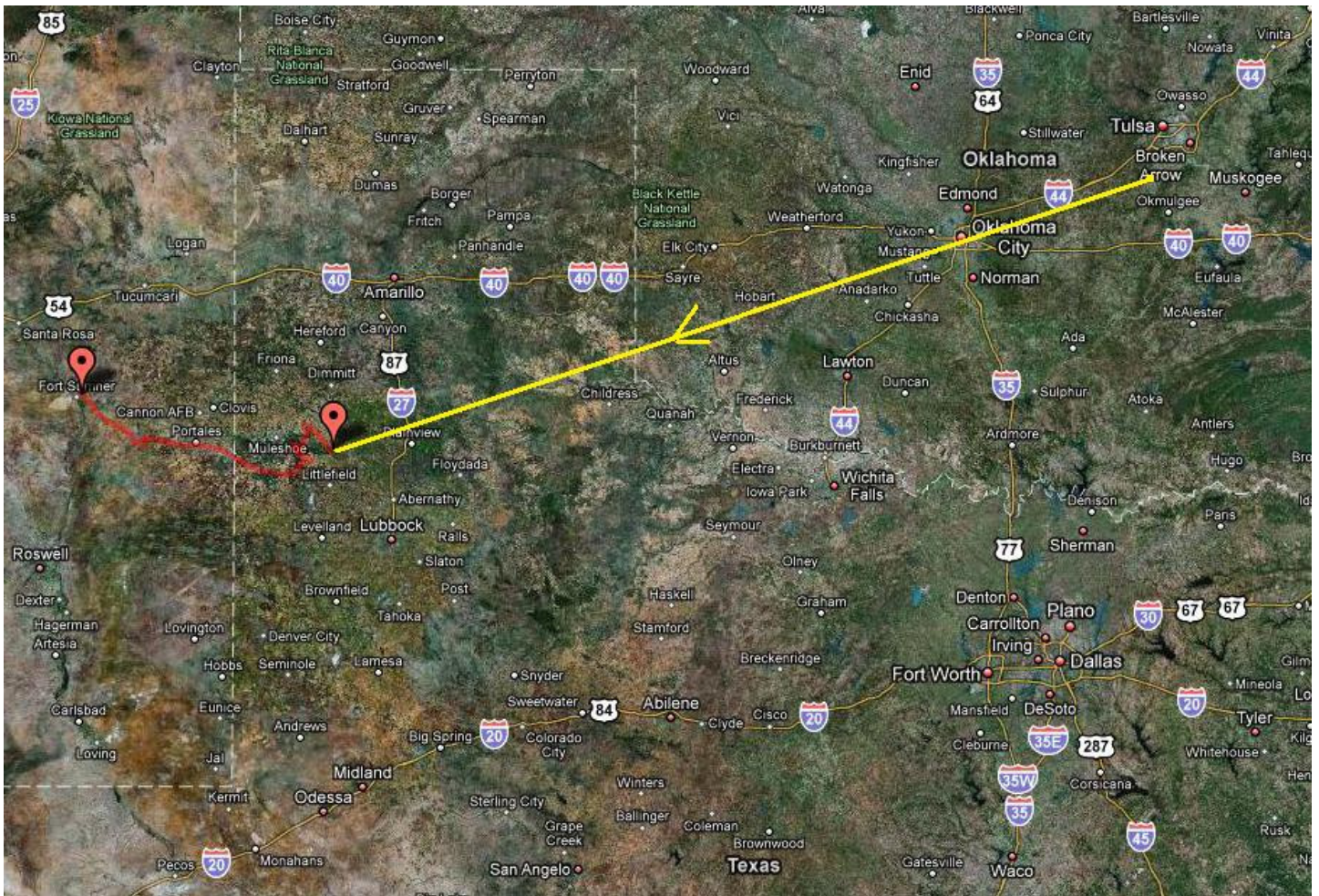
would not have resulted in any noticeable motion. Only when the balloon exited the stratosphere did it's motion become erratic.

7. The shape was unique. It was described as a bell shaped object or the same shape as the space shuttle as seen from below. These are triangular type shapes, which are very similar to the pictures taken of the same balloon by Dave Trembley. Other witnesses who made UFO reports of the balloon also used "triangular" in their descriptions. After looking through 400 miles of atmosphere, I would expect the shape to become somewhat blurred and irregular.

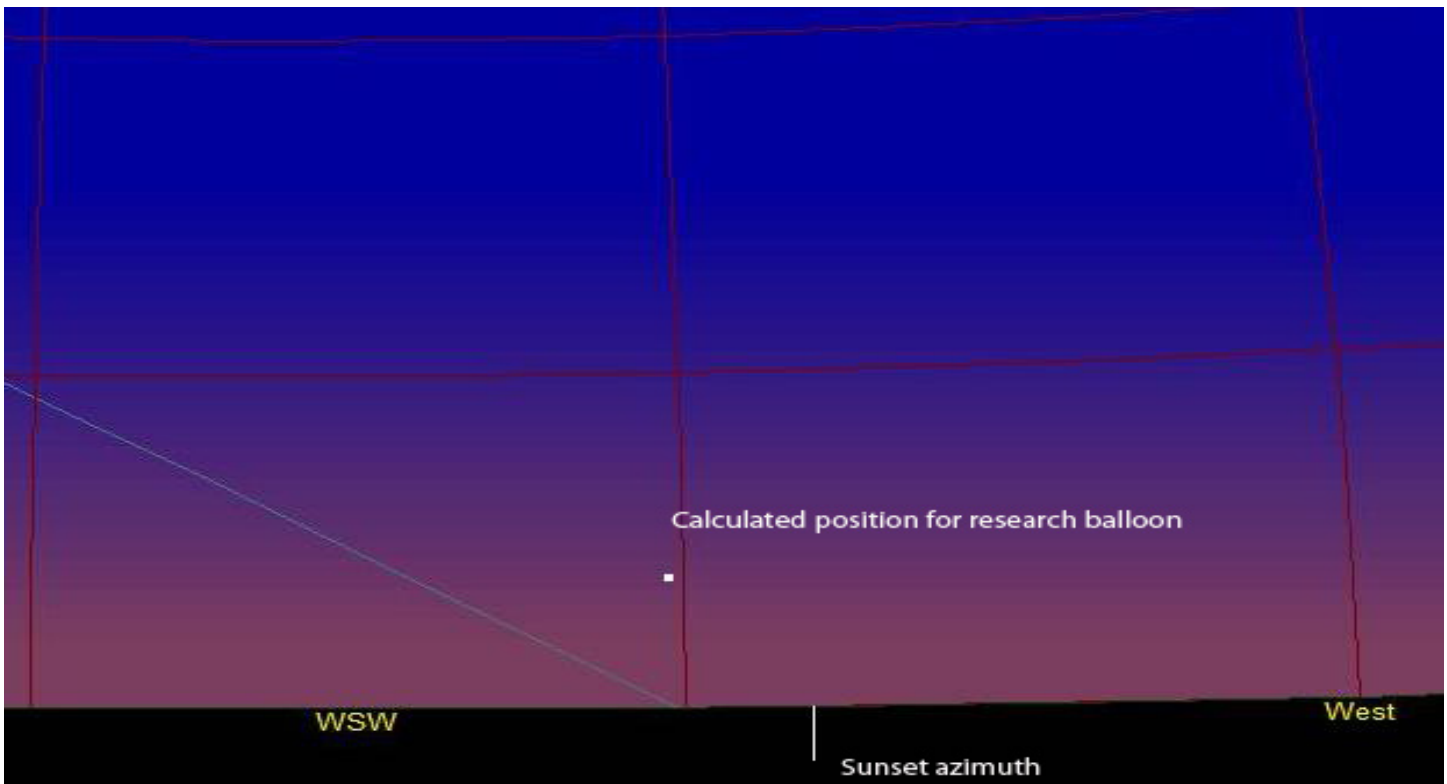
The reporter was insistent in his e-mails that the event must remain an "unknown" to him. This attitude frustrated me. As an amateur astronomer, when I see something unusual, I certainly want to figure it out. If I stumbled across a fuzzy, comet-like object while scanning the night sky I would not immediately call the International Astronomical Union (IAU) about discovering a comet! An experienced amateur astronomer will examine his charts and check to see if there are other potential sources for his observation prior to contacting the IAU. It appears that the "thrill of discovery" and emotional appeal of seeing a "true" UFO has motivated this observer to file a report with MUFON without checking for a potential source of the event.

I saw several blogs proclaiming this sighting an excellent example of a UFO report made by experienced astronomers. As I stated two issues ago, it is hard for astronomers to be knowledgeable about everything and they may stumble across an event they have never seen before. None of these blogs bothered to question the level of experience these individuals actually had or if all the observers agreed what they saw was "not of this world". The individual, who made the report seemed knowledgeable but it takes more than that to make one a careful observer, who tries to be thorough in his observations. These same blogs did not bother to look and see if there were any potential objects that could have created the UFO report. So much for scientific curiosity.

Unless somebody can provide evidence to the contrary, this UFO was, most likely, a research balloon.



The sighting line towards the research balloon for the time period in question. This is a modified version of the NASA map at their website. Observatory location is approximate.



The approximate position of the research balloon in relation to the horizon and sunset azimuth. Azimuth grid is in 15 degree increments and elevation grid is in 10 degree increments. Image from Orion's "The Sky" planetarium program

A pioneering forensic scientist named Professor Edmond Locard (1877-1966) once wrote, *"Physical evidence cannot be wrong, it cannot perjure itself, it cannot be wholly absent. Only human failure to find it, study and understand it can diminish its value."*

When UFOs first caught my interest at age nine, I embraced this philosophy wholeheartedly. Blurry pictures and shaky video were not sufficient. I wanted hard evidence. I was not willing to simply take it on faith that unidentified aerial phenomena were extraterrestrial spaceships. Over the years, I became increasingly frustrated and disappointed with the apparent failure of researchers to prove the existence of extraterrestrial intelligence.

After all, the whole point of conducting UFO research is to identify unknown objects in the sky. Observed from afar, they provide little information. If, however, one of these objects were to crash then there would be a chance of obtaining physical remains for study. Subsequently I became interested in UFO crash retrieval stories because they offered the best hope of providing the evidence I craved.

Reading everything I could find on such famous (or infamous) incidents as Roswell, Aztec, and Kecksburg, I soon began to notice emerging patterns. It seemed that many UFO crash retrieval stories shared common elements:

- The incident and recovery of debris allegedly had the highest level of security classification (as in an unacknowledged special access "black" project).
- The unknown object crashed on public (usually rural) land in relatively close proximity to a civilian population.
- Civilian witnesses were often interrogated and warned by government officials to forget what they saw.
- The crash site was secured and controlled by government personnel for as long as deemed necessary to conduct recovery operations.
- Cleanup of crash debris was given top priority.

C.S.I. UFO: Are UFOlogists afraid of physical evidence?

By Peter W. Merlin

While overall details differ, all UFO crash retrieval stories seem to end the same way. A government cleanup crew – sometimes common soldiers, sometimes elite special forces – sanitizes the crash site, removing every trace of debris. Civilian UFO investigators are therefore left with no hope of finding physical evidence at the scene.

Is such a thing possible or even probable? Could the government sanitize a crash site? Taken at face value, it initially seemed likely. Whatever government agency responded to such an incident would probably have access to practically unlimited resources with which to accomplish the task of eradicating evidence. But, was there a historic precedent?

It occurred to me that government response in the wake of a crash involving a Top Secret aircraft (such as those flown from the remote Area 51 test facility at Groom Lake, Nevada, for example) would be virtually indistinguishable from the response to a UFO crash. National security concerns would dictate a need to prevent classified materials from falling into the hands of civilians or foreign intelligence agents.

In 1992 I began researching crashes involving once-classified aircraft. After conducting numerous interviews and reviewing thousands of pages of declassified documents I found that many incidents involving previously unacknowledged "black" programs bore startling similarities to alleged UFO crash retrievals. Examples included mishaps involving such craft as the A-12 spy plane, D-21B drone, and F-117A "stealth fighter."

In the early 1960s, the Central Intelligence Agency funded and managed a project to design, build, test, and operate a reconnaissance plane capable of attaining speeds of more than 2,000 miles per hour and altitudes up to 90,000 feet. The

Lockheed A-12 was first flown in 1962 but its existence remained a closely guarded secret until 1981. Two other variants – the YF-12A interceptor and SR-71 reconnaissance plane – were funded by the Air Force and publicly surfaced in 1964, in part to serve as a cover for sightings of the A-12 during testing or overseas deployment.

When an A-12 crashed near Wendover, Utah, in May 1963, the CIA deflected public and media scrutiny with a cover story that an ordinary F-105 fighter jet had crashed. Declassified documents indicate that security was paramount and cleanup was top priority, even superseding the accident investigation.

Around the same time Lockheed developed a stealthy, ramjet-powered reconnaissance drone called the D-21 to be launched from an A-12 variant. A fatal accident led to a modified version, designated D-21B, which was instead carried under the wing of a B-52 bomber and launched using a booster rocket.

Subsequently, in September 1967 a D-21B was inadvertently launched during what was supposed to have been a captive test flight over central Nevada. According to interviews with military and civilian witnesses, personnel from Area 51 secured the crash site as quickly as possible and members of the cleanup crew walked shoulder-to-shoulder through the debris field, picking up every piece. Witnesses were admonished to forget what they had seen.

Lockheed's F-117A, first flown in 1981, was designed to be virtually invisible to radar infrared detection. Developed as a clandestine "black" program in the late 1970s, tested at Area 51, and deployed to operational units at nearby Tonopah Test Range, the airplane's existence was a closely guarded secret for nearly a decade.

When one of the secret jets crashed on a mountain near Bakersfield, California, in July 1986 the impact site was declared a National Defense Area to prevent entry by unauthorized personnel. Armed guards manned roadblocks at perimeter checkpoints and helicopters patrolled the skies as crews worked for several weeks to clean up the site. Air Force spokesmen

refused to identify the aircraft type. Confirmation didn't come until the existence of the F-117A was announced in November 1988.

With details of these events now declassified, it is possible for civilian researchers to study official correspondence and accident investigation reports, interview civilian and government witnesses, and visit crash sites to search for debris. Physical evidence is retrieved from a crash site can be studied and identified using declassified documents, photos, and even entire airframes on display in museums. The results of such research can serve as baseline data for comparison to UFO crash retrieval stories. In fact, I visited many such crash sites and in every instance found identifiable physical evidence. The sites had not been sanitized. I thought UFOlogists would embrace this information since they had always been told that the government cleans up every trace of debris at Top Secret crash sites. I now had conclusive proof that this was not true.

While I was wondering how best to share my data with UFO researchers, author Curtis Peebles introduced me to an online discussion forum called UFO UpDates hosted by Errol Bruce-Knapp on VirtualyStrange.net. Forum members included a wide cross-section of people including some well-known names in UFOlogy and nearly every new post sparked a lively discussion. I gravitated toward the Roswell entries even though I had long since become convinced that the 1947 incident in the New Mexico desert involved nothing more fantastic than some sort of balloon and radar reflector system. Believers were still pushing the idea that government forces had completely sanitized the debris field.

In a July 24, 2005, UFO UpDates exchange Robert Gates and Christopher Allen debated the idea that civilian witnesses to the Roswell Incident had remained silent for decades as a result of secrecy oaths. As an illustrative example of a supposedly similar event Gates cited the A-12 crash near Wendover, claiming that, "local civilian witnesses were sworn to secrecy, and to this day have not uttered a word..."

I posted a response several days later, under the heading "Crash Retrieval: A New

Perspective." In order to make it stand out, I posted my message as a new topic and used the A-12 incident to frame my thesis that examining similar crash retrieval events could help create a template for studying alleged UFO crash retrieval stories. I gave a detailed account of my investigation of the Wendover mishap, citing documents, witness interviews, and fieldwork. I particularly emphasized the physical evidence that remained at the crash site itself without overtly mentioning the implications for Roswell. Readers could draw their own conclusions. With the hook thus baited, I awaited my first response.

I was prepared for a spirited debate, assertions that extraterrestrial crash sites would be treated differently than those of even the most exotic Earthly craft, and demands for proof. My rebuttals were ready. I was even prepared for at least some researchers to recognize the implication that I was offering hope of finding actual physical evidence at a UFO crash site (or disproving a false site). I was not prepared for silence.

A week went by with no response. None. Nada. Zip. Zilch. Zero. After more than a month without a single response to my revolutionary ideas, I unsubscribed to UFO UpDates. Did no one realize I was offering a set of tools with the potential to produce the Holy Grail of UFOlogy as well as to weed out hoaxes and false leads? Perhaps I just needed to find the right audience.

When I learned of the 4th Annual UFO Crash Retrieval Conference, scheduled for November 2006 in Las Vegas, I contacted organizer Ryan Wood and asked if he would like me to give a presentation called, "After the Fire: How the Government Responds to Top Secret Crashes." He said, yes, and added me to the three-day program that included Richard Dolan, Michael Lindemann, Stanton Friedman, Nick Redfern, Linda Moulton Howe, Bruce Maccabee, and others.

During the event KLAS-TV investigative reporter George Knapp gave a keynote address covering his experiences with UFOlogy that included interviews with such controversial figures as Robert Lazar and Dr. Dan Burish. His rapid-fire delivery and subtle turn of phrase were awesome

to behold. "I think the assumption for far too long among mainstream media, my colleagues, is that anyone who's interested in UFOs is a crackpot, a whacko, someone in desperate need of some kind of psychiatric attention," said Knapp. "And, unfortunately," he added, "A lot of times, they're right."

Ryan Wood gave a presentation titled, "A New U.S. UFO Crash Retrieval," that supposedly promised to be "the breakthrough event for UFOlogy." Wood said the incident that allegedly occurred near Death Valley, California, according to a prospector's story from an August 1949 edition of the San Francisco Examiner, offered "the potential for compelling physical evidence." Wood showed recent photos of a desert rock outcrop he had identified as the "crash site" based on the help of someone using a "remote viewing" (skeptics would call it "imagining") technique. Wood found no debris at the location.

Dr. Michael Salla, using what he called "testimony of key military whistleblowers" and the highly suspect "SOM-1 Special Operations Manual," gave an overview of supposed covert mechanisms and processes used by the government to manage UFO crash retrievals. The idea of elite, covert teams capable of sanitizing crash sites was a common theme at the conference until I took the podium.

To prepare for my presentation I had researched about a dozen incidents involving retrievals of various classified aerospace vehicles and weapons in the western U.S., spanning a period of approximately 50 years. I wrote detailed case studies of seven incidents and then selected three that most closely resembled classic UFO crash retrieval stories. At the conference I explained to an audience of 300 how visiting these crash sites today and studying the remaining physical evidence can provide insight into the effectiveness of government/military crash retrieval activities. I summarized my findings by noting that I could provide numerous additional case studies involving incidents in which responsible government agencies had sufficient motivation to completely sanitize crash sites in order to protect advanced materials, design configurations, or other classified information. I reiterated that material evidence indicates that these sites were not sanitized despite good reason

and opportunity to do so. I also emphasized that although some UFO crash incidents would doubtless prove to be hoaxes or misidentified terrestrial objects, if they involved real events, then evidence should remain to determine the nature of those events.

The audience greeted the conclusion of my lecture with polite applause and surprisingly few questions though I was gratified that some people had understood my main points. The other speakers, of whom at least several support the idea that “black ops” teams routinely sanitize UFO crash sites, largely ignored me for the duration of the conference. Someone later told me that Linda Moulton Howe even suggested that I was “an obvious government agent.”

As with my earlier UFO UpDates experience, I was surprised by such attitudes. For the first time ever, someone was offering UFO researchers hope of finding proof of extraterrestrial intelligence. Wouldn't a government disinformation agent try to crush such hope by suggesting that nothing would be left to find because it had all been cleaned up?

I certainly hadn't presented my thesis from a skeptical viewpoint. I merely provided an investigative tool that would be equally useful to believers and skeptics alike. In an era when numerous popular television shows (C.S.I. – Crime Scene Investigation and its spinoffs, Navy NCIS, Forensic Files, and others) feature forensic science as a tool for solving mysteries using analysis of physical evidence, UFO researchers are rejecting or ignoring such methods. What are they afraid of?



Peter with a piece of debris from the D-21b crash site, which was supposedly cleaned thoroughly and left no trace of the classified object crash.



Some of the many pieces Peter recovered from an A-12 crash site in Utah that was also cleaned up with an effort to retrieve every scrap of material from the craft. Notice the inspection markings and serial numbers that can trace the debris back to the skunkworks.

Editor's note: Peter has an excellent account of the 1963 A-12 crash in Utah. The title of the article is called "Oxcart down! - Searching for the remains of a secret spy plane. It is a superb read. One of the SECRET documents presented has the reporting officer stating, "All small bits and pieces meticulously picked up by hand...." Apparently, not ALL had been recovered.

So what??

For those of the crashed spaceships persuasion, Peter's experience demonstrates that no crash site can be sanitized to the point that no debris would be left. Every location is going to have some scraps left over that were missed! There have been at least two expeditions to the Foster Ranch debris field and nothing has ever been found that was unearthly.

To top it off, there is supposed to be at least one other location for the rest of the crash, which shifts every time a new book is published. No verifiable alien spaceship debris has ever been found at any of these locations.

Were those that cleaned up the actual crash sites of these classified aircraft inept? Were the soldiers and officers at Roswell just better at picking up every single

scrap of debris? If not, why hasn't anyone been able to produce a single item from the crash even though two extremely careful examinations have been made?

The lack of any verifiable physical evidence in these locations indicates what landed there was cleaned up the way no other crash site was ever “sanitized” or that it was something of a more earthly origin.

Shiprock NM and the Allan Grant meteorite hunt of 1947

I originally wanted to put this in the Roswell corner. However, Mr. Bragalia's expose about being "stalked" forced me to write an article so I can lay out my case and present some issues he chose not to tell.

Last issue, I described how I determined that the Allan Grant story probably had more to do with a meteorite hunt in early November 1947 than a meteorite hunt in July 1947. I had laid out the evidence as I saw it and stated that as far as I was concerned the case was closed. Now Anthony Bragalia states that I am wrong and this was all addressed long ago between him and the Grants.

Some background

I think it is important to understand how communications between Mr. Bragalia and I transpired. Mr. Bragalia tends to e-mail me directly arguing his case about Nitinol and such. He also likes to e-mail me with challenges/opinions for every blog entry he makes. I often question what he writes simply because he does not often explain himself or list his source material. When he begins to run on and make little sense, I will tire and make a comment asking if he really has anything new or to keep trying. This usually ends the exchange as he makes some retort about his abilities as an investigator and that he is always ten steps ahead of me. I can only think of one instance, where I initiated any communication between Mr. Bragalia and myself. That had to do with the origin of the Shiprock photograph and questions about Mr. Grant's story. I had seen Bragalia's article but he did not include all the photographs that were available. Somebody directed me towards the Above Top Secret forum where additional photographs were posted. Mr. Bragalia informed me they were from Mr. Grant's website on the subject. He never mentioned any discussions that he made with the Grants over problems with the photographs being posted on the site. He also never mentioned this in his blog entry or in response to any comments made by others. When I asked Mr. Bragalia if he had anything other than the photograph and testimony of the witnesses, he became rather indignant. He typed in all caps that he could not believe I doubted the Grants story. I then asked if there were any records from Life magazine that

he was aware of that might confirm the story. He stated I was ignorant because I should know that Life magazine no longer publishes and there would be no records to search. With this kind of cooperation, I terminated the exchange. I had already become aware of an issue with the photograph showing Shiprock, N.M. but I chose not to bring it up because of his attitude.

Bragalia's e-mail response

A few days after SUNlite was placed on the web, I received an e-mail titled "Shiprock – you lose" from Mr. Bragalia. Bragalia demanded I retract the story because he had discussed the Shiprock photograph long ago with Mrs. Grant. He then produced the text from an e-mail he had received from her in March of 2007. In the text, Mrs. Grant acknowledged that the photograph could not be from the July 1947 meteor hunt and stated:

By the way, in November of '47, just four months after Roswell, Allan was sent to Shiprock, NM do a story on "Food for the Navajos". My suspicion is that when Allan did his website he looked for a photo that showed an area that resembled what he remembered and perhaps the photo he picked was from the "Navajo" take rather than from the Roswell one (my emphasis).¹

I responded to this e-mail **less than one hour after I received it** and responded:

How did a trip to go look for a "meteorite" in November 1947 turn into "Food for Navajos"? Sorry, you have yet to provide any evidence to suggest that his story about July 1947 is factual. All we have is memories that sound so similar to the November 1947 meteorite hunt it is hard to dismiss. As I stated, provide some real evidence (other than these faded memories) to alter my conclusion and I will gladly publish it.²

My offer was a genuine gesture for Bragalia to once again present evidence that supported the claim of the Grants.

Mr. Bragalia's response was not to answer this question or present any evidence. He did go into a very long-winded diatribe about how reliable the Grants were and

they knew what happened when because they were "detail oriented" and "lived by the clock". In that e-mail exchange, Bragalia also brought up three points he felt my readers should know³.

1. **The issue of Shiprock was specifically and directly addressed over two and a half years ago by Mr. Bragalia with the Grants.** This was a private e-mail which was never published or mentioned to me in previous exchanges. The idea it was a "Food for Navajos" story is just more evidence that there is confusion about dates and places.
2. **You are required to let readers know that the Grants mentioned both events and distinguished between them in emails to Mr. Bragalia- and that they offered an explanation for any confusion.** As I have constantly stated, the confusion appears to be on Grant's part. Mr. Grant published a photograph that had to do with a meteorite hunt at Shiprock and it was presented as an image from his Roswell hunt. They have since changed the story about the photograph twice according to Bragalia! For people who were so "detail oriented", they seemed to get confused about the details of when the photographs were taken.
3. **You must make it clear that in 1997 Allan published in the LA Times about his recollection of the specific date of July 7, 1947- that he was alone, and that he maintains he was provided a gun- and that this is distinctly different than the Shiprock details that you have provided.** From the story posted on the UFOMIND website (which supposedly came from the LA times), Grant never gave a specific date of July 7 and he stated he had a driver with a jeep. This means he was not "alone". For the meteorite search to be conducted efficiently, it would require everyone to break up into small groups. This would mean he would have been "alone" (with one other person - the driver) to search his area of the grid. This is evident in the photograph he took of a wide expanse with one searcher in the foreground. Giving him a pistol is not that big a deal either. He probably was provided some form of personal protection

just in case he ran into some wildlife that might harm him. There is nothing about his story, as presented in the LA Times, that is "distinctly different" from the November 1947 meteorite hunt explanation.

Food for Navajos

Intrigued by Mrs. Grant mention of the "food for Navajos" story, I did another newspaper archive search and discovered that there was such a story that happened in 1947. The event was in December of 1947 and was called the "Navajo Brotherhood caravan" (or the "mile of trucks") and ran supplies from Albuquerque to Gallup, NM. (roughly 90 miles south of Shiprock) where the Indians took possession of the supplies. The Navajos were having a tough time of it and people throughout the state were helping out. I then told Mr. Bragalia that the "food for Navajos" story did not happen in November 1947. This all transpired before his article was published on the UFO Iconoclasts website.

Bragalia's rebuttal

A few weeks later, Mr. Bragalia posted his article about being the victim of a "stalking" skeptic. This apparently was written because I had the nerve to write articles that disagreed with his conclusions and demonstrated his reasoning/research was flawed.

According to Mr. Bragalia's version of our e-mail exchange, I was "stunned silent" by the revelation that Mrs. Grant had discussed the Shiprock photograph. I found it odd that Mr. Bragalia did not mention my prompt response. Another strange item was how he presented Mrs. Grant's e-mail:

The Grants clearly state in that email: "Just four months after Roswell, Allan was sent to Shiprock, N.M." .⁴

Completely missing is the rest of the sentence about the "food for Navajos" explanation. He also added that I admitted an error but I could not find this statement in my e-mail so I am not sure what he is talking about.

Bragalia now tells us the third version of the photograph's origin:

In follow-up correspondence I asked the Grants if there was any way possible that they were confusing the Shiprock, NM meteor hunt in November with Allan's flight to the Roswell area in July of 1947.... In the Shiprock visit in November, Grant explained that he was not alone- he was met by Dr. Lincoln LaPaz and Boyd Wetlauffer.⁵

I was somewhat surprised because Bragalia did not mention this "correspondence" in our exchange. He even seemed to think that the "food for Navajos" story was adequate to explain the photograph because he never mentioned or presented the "follow-up correspondence".

In a later exchange initiated by Bragalia, I brought up some of these issues with him regarding this "rebuttal". I asked how he figured I was "stunned silent" even though I responded with a query less than one hour later and if he could provide me evidence of this correspondence where the November 1947 meteor hunt was revealed. I also stated that I would no longer keep any e-mail exchanges between us private because of things he had been saying and misrepresenting. With that news he proclaimed he would not answer any questions because I would not discuss them in private. I could only assume that what he was going to say could not be stated in public. Still missing was the evidence that Bragalia discussed the meteor hunt in November 1947 with the Grants before I published my article or an explanation of how I was "stunned silent".

Hitting the campaign trail

In addition to his article regarding my "stalking", Mr. Bragalia told me he was going to various forums to tell everybody about the falsehoods I have been spreading. He posted in the Space.com forum, which is pretty open and there are those sympathetic to his cause. Bragalia told me he was going to post in the Bad Astronomy and Universe Today (BAUT) forum but didn't appear to do so. Instead, he chose to post in the Reality Uncovered forum. I knew the moderator and informed him of his "guest". I added that I would not participate because of my personal bias on the matter. The moderator disagreed and invited me to join into a debate that he would moderate closely. I made my post raising many points about the Shiprock

photograph and how Mr. Bragalia seems to have omitted some information in his article. Mr. Bragalia did not answer any of these points and, instead, chose to attack me stating I was unprofessional and was trying to "mine" him for information. Mr. Bragalia had his chance to present his case under conditions which would be closely moderated. Instead of presenting his evidence, he chose not to answer any questions and left the forum.

Case is still closed unless.....

The bottom line in all of this is that the trip in November 1947 that produced the Shiprock photograph had everything to do with a meteorite hunt and nothing to do with "feeding the Navajos". Bragalia is now stating that there were **TWO** 1947 meteorite hunts in New Mexico that Grant attended but did not publish. One was highly publicized. The other was never mentioned in the press but had a publicity logo on the side of the plane. Looking at this information, it still seems very likely that the November 1947 event is the source for this story told by Grant. As I stated in my original article, *As far as I am concerned, the case is closed unless real proof is presented showing the Roswell version is true.*⁶ Without Bragalia presenting some real evidence and not just memories, the case still remains closed.

Notes and references

1. Bragalia, Anthony. E-mail to the author. 5 September, 2009.
2. Printy, Timothy. E-mail to Anthony Bragalia. 5 September 2009.
3. Bragalia, Anthony. E-mail to the author. 5 September, 2009.
4. Bragalia, Anthony. Stalked by a saucer Skeptic. UFO Iconoclast Blog available: <http://ufocon.blogspot.com/2009/09/stalked-by-saucer-skeptic-by-anthony.html>
5. *ibid.*
6. Printy, Timothy. "Life Magazine photographer and the Roswell Incident: Case Closed!" SUNlite September-October 2009. Page 7

The Zamora UFO event has always been a puzzling case with many explanations offered and none have been plausible enough to be accepted as reasonable. Over the years, we have heard it could be a hoax generated by the town (Klass), a hot air balloon (Larry Robinson), a hot air balloon being tested by the CIA (James Easton), a test of the Surveyor lander with a helicopter (Prof. Moore and Dave Thomas), and, of course, a spaceship of some kind being flown by aliens. There are some other ideas but these are the major ones.

All of these explanations (other than the alien spaceship) have failed to satisfy the UFO proponents. I sort of liked the hot air balloon and the Surveyor helicopter theories. They seemed plausible but lacked any good evidence to confirm them. The attempt for skeptics to explain this case mirrored Major Quintanilla's effort at the time of the event:

Although I labeled the case "Unidentified" I've never been satisfied with that classification. I've always felt that too many essential elements of the case were missing. These are the intangible elements which are impossible to check, so the solution to this case could very well be lying dormant in Lonnie Zamora's head.¹

Like Quintanilla, I think the case's solution lies with Lonnie Zamora. Quintanilla's investigation appeared to be exhaustive as far as normal military operations are concerned. As a result, I can think of only a few possibilities:

1. Something very classified
2. Something constructed by a civilian contractor that the military did not know about.
3. Something military/government related that slipped past the investigation.
4. A hoax
5. A lie by Zamora to conceal something.
6. Some form of exotic craft not of this earth.

The problem with investigating this case

The Socorro case "Definitively exposed"?

is that many records are very difficult to locate unless you know exactly where to look. If it were something highly classified, then it would be extremely difficult to solve. In my opinion, the idea of a hoax is difficult without Lonnie Zamora's participation. I think most skeptics feel there is a reasonable explanation but the evidence for it hasn't surfaced. Imagine my surprise when I was made aware of another attempt to explain it using the approach Phil Klass made some time ago.

Teasing the skeptic

On September 5th, in another one of his e-mail "challenges", Anthony Bragalia pointed me towards his recent article about Linus Pauling and Roswell. In that e-mail he noted the relationship between Pauling and New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (NMT) president, Stirling Colgate concerning UFOs. I then made an observation about the letter he referenced regarding Pauling and Colgate:

BTW, Are we talking about the letter where Colgate stated that he felt the Zamora sighting had to do with a hoax created by a student???? It makes you wonder. This was before Klass made that claim.²

Actually, I was wrong about it being before Klass made the claim but that is beside the point. Bragalia responded that I was trying to play "gotcha" and added that he had already acted on that information. For some reason, Bragalia seemed to think I was going to try and "scoop" him on this story. His response also added that he was going to "definitively expose" the case and solve it before me. For some reason he thought I was going to write about this in SUNlite even though I was only going to give it a casual mention when discussing Pauling and Roswell.

I can be skeptical too!

In his "expose", Bragalia documents contacting several individuals and Colgate who knew/heard stories about it being a hoax. Bragalia states that Dr. Colgate gave only brief answers to his questions

and Colgate was going to make some inquiries. The implications was he had vital information that would break the case wide open. However, Dr. Colgate did not contact him again.

The other stories described by Bragalia did not involve any direct information. They were all second hand stories of knowing somebody who knew something. It really was not very good evidence at all. When Bragalia closed his article with more speculation and no names/methodology being revealed, I was very disappointed.

I pointed the article to several skeptics I communicate with regularly. My initial comment in that e-mail was:

My opinion is that it lacks details. Lots of rumors/stories from yesteryear but unless the individuals involved are identified/confess and the method explained I doubt it will be "case closed". This is basically how Klass explained the case but his hoaxers were people from the town and not students.³

The general consensus I got from these skeptics was that Bragalia's new revelations were intriguing. However, without better information (identities and method) the case could not be considered solved/closed by a long shot. UFOlogists did not like Klass' idea about a hoax and I did not think they would accept Bragalia's either.

We are missing the punchline

For some reason, Mr. Bragalia felt he wanted my opinion on his "skeptical" piece and sent me an e-mail shortly after it appeared. I had already read the article and sent the e-mail I mentioned previously. I responded to Mr. Bragalia's request regarding what I thought:

It is like a joke told where the punchline falls flat. A lot of build up based on stories but no names and no methodology of how the hoax was performed. As a result, it was disappointing. I have already discussed this with several others and we pretty much agreed it is intriguing but lacks any substance/evidence that can confirm the explanation as valid. Good luck selling it to the UFOlogy crowd.⁴

With this response, he became upset and called me disingenuous because I had seemed to indicate I was going to look into the Colgate-Pauling letter. He interpreted that my opinion was negative simply because he wrote it. To be honest, I would not have written any article indicating the case was closed/exposed unless I could have something substantial to back it up. I did not consider this article any more thorough than theory proposed by Klass. It falls short and certainly was not going to convince anybody in the UFO community.

The reaction by some on the blog was similar. Some felt it was possible this was the case but several disagreed strongly. To them the evidence presented was inadequate to say the case was solved/exposed. Instead of acknowledging these points, Mr. Bragalia chose to be combative with Paul Kimball. When some of the more prominent UFO researchers weighed in with their opinion, Mr. Bragalia stopped being combative and went to the position of not questioning what Colgate told him. Perhaps if we had more information from Colgate himself, we might understand the situation better.

Dave Thomas steps in to help

When I directed Dave Thomas towards this article, he was intrigued and told me he would see Dr. Colgate soon and ask him about the article and its conclusions. Dr. Colgate seemed displeased about where this all was going. He told Thomas that he was very busy with his research and had little time to talk to Bragalia about an old UFO case that meant very little to him.

Dr. Colgate complained to Thomas that he was under the initial impression that Bragalia was a qualified historian researching Dr. Pauling's interest in UFOs. Colgate apparently responded as a professional courtesy. When he discovered that Bragalia was not a bona fide historian, he was not pleased and attempted to terminate the exchange as he was very busy. Dr. Colgate explained to Thomas that he thought he could make Bragalia stop bothering him by offering to forward his request to a colleague, who was studying the possibility that UFO reports could be related to "ionized plasma discharges". Unfortunately, this offer fell flat

with Bragalia because he only wanted to know about the Zamora story.

Thomas informed me that he has been unable to get Dr. Colgate to elaborate about the comments made in the Pauling letter. However, in an effort to help correct the situation, Thomas offered to Colgate and Bragalia to act as a go-between, which is where the situation stands right now.

Dave Thomas is trying to help Bragalia resolve the issue of the "mysterious pranksters". He has made inquiries with various alumni groups to get input from students who were enrolled/present at the time of the incident. He attended a recent alumni reunion and asked about knowledge concerning such a prank. Nobody seemed interested in the story or knew anything about it. In an effort to get somebody to step forward, Bragalia/Thomas are placing an add in the alumni newsletter and working on some sort of website to gather more information.

So far, Dave Thomas has had no luck in finding any more evidence to suggest the story of a student hoax actually happened. Still, Bragalia seems to think this is the truth and continued to push the story on the UFO Iconoclast(s) blog.

If at first you don't succeed...

Bragalia tried again to present his case only two weeks later with a second expose' reassuring his readers that he was on the case and getting closer. Unfortunately, it had the same stuff with just a few new names talking about pranksters over the year at NMT. I know that he proclaimed to me that he knew it was a hoax and was going to prove it. It is my opinion that Mr. Bragalia has become somewhat obsessed in his efforts to find anything, no matter how remote, to confirm his suspicions.

The response by the UFO community was as I expected. They all are pretty sure it was an alien spaceship and were not going to buy any hoax theory unless there was solid proof. I would accept names and method as a good start. For the "faithful", it will take much more. I think it would take photographs of Lonnie Zamora seeing the hoax in action for these proponents to accept the idea.

Frank Warren felt Bragalia had "jumped the gun" with his evidence. Meanwhile, Ray Stanford issued a public challenge to debate Bragalia and Dr. Colgate on "Coast to Coast"! I think Stanford does not realize that Dr. Colgate is not even interested in this case and has only been drug into this thing because he wrote a note at the bottom of a letter over forty years ago. Stanford's beef is with Bragalia.

Case not closed....yet

I wrote to James Moseley once that I think there really are some UFO cases that puzzle me. This is one of those cases. I do think there is an explanation other than an alien spaceship but exactly what it was is impossible to say without a time machine. When some really good evidence arises that gives us a source for this UFO story, I will gladly accept it. Unfortunately, the evidence presented by Mr. Bragalia isn't much better than the evidence presented by Klass. Wake me up when the students come forward with how they did it. I suggest they bring pictures for UFOlogists to examine.

Notes and references

1. Quintanilla, Hector. "UFO's: An Air Force Dilemma." Unpublished Manuscript. National Institute for Discovery Science, 1974. Page 33.
2. Printy, Timothy. E-mail to Anthony Bragalia. 5 September 2009.
3. Printy, Timothy. E-mail to various individuals. 23 September 2009.
4. Printy, Timothy. E-mail to Anthony Bragalia. 24 September 2009.

POSTSCRIPT: Dave Thomas has informed me that he is pretty much dealing with all individuals trying to contact Dr. Colgate about Socorro. One individual e-mailed Colgate suggesting the letter itself was a hoax! Dr. Colgate has made it clear that he has no time for this kind of nonsense and just forwards these items to Dave anyway. Anybody reading this article with questions about this case should contact Dave Thomas at NMSR. Hopefully, he can answer your questions for you.

IMPLANTS ANYONE!?

Matthew Graeber



I once attended a speaking engagement at a gathering of the American Society of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in 1977 - I was to follow an elderly gentleman who had been researching UFO reports for decades. As I entered the dining room of the hall I encountered a young man assisting the primary speaker (we'll call him Mr. Compton) who was quite visually impaired and poking about in a wooden upright dining room cabinet which doubled as the speaker's podium. Inside the cabinet, small oil and vinegar bottles were also stored before being placed on the dining tables with the dinner salads.

Although the young man was repeatedly assuring the speaker only vinegar and oil bottles were stored in the cabinet, the legally blind speaker persisted in rummaging about in the cabinet as if looking for something else to be there. (It was quite strange and oddly amusing affair). I do not recall learning what Mr. Compton may have thought might have been nestled within the cabinet, but, he did knock a few bottles over during his search.

As the speaker finally settled down behind the podium and the microphone was adjusted to his satisfaction, the lights in the dining room dimmed and a slide presentation enhanced the expert's presentation quite a bit.

The first slide was a photo of an unfurled American flag. Mr. Compton said "I always show this slide first because I believe in truth!" A voice from somewhere the dark-

ness chimed in with something about "leaping tall buildings in a single bound" but, Mr. Compton didn't seem to be distracted by this whimsical comment as he continued. "I've been investigating UFO reports for many years, and let me make it perfectly clear, I'm not a contactee, However, I do know several and if you listen to what I have to say you will be endowed by the friendly saucers and able to protect yourself from the hostiles." (Many in the audience seemed to slide forward in their seats a little bit.)

Then, a barrage of slides shown in rapid succession with a brief explanation concerning each photographer's credibility, the date and location of the alleged UFO incident followed. Many of the photos were quite old and were obviously 'borrowed' from UFO books and group journals. Most were poorly centered in the frame, out-of-focus and of quite distant or small objects...(Were they insects on the wing, birds, frisbees, hubcaps or, alien space ships, stars or planets? It was quite difficult for anyone to tell with any degree of certainty.)

Then, Mr. Compton warned the audience of the dangers of approaching the Globe, Football-shaped and Bee Hive-like UFOs and how to thwart their attacks with a common handheld flashlight! Apparently, one could also use the flashlight to perform a "UFO Friendship Test", which was fully explained in Mr. Compton's handy 32 page pocket-size booklet which was on sale in the rear of the hall.

Perhaps the most remarkable part of Mr. Compton's presentation concerned his revelations about a middle-aged woman (Mrs. Brotmann) of Philadelphia, who was out walking her beagle puppy at sunset one summer's eve when she was struck down by fleeing a 2 1/2 to 3 inch in diameter UFO.

According to Compton, Mrs. Brotmann had just been bending over while adjusting her puppy's collar and as she was starting to straighten up she was shocked to see the tiny UFO flying straight toward her face. She tried to take evasive action but, the glowing UFO was traveling so fast that it hit her squarely in the forehead knocking her to the ground while lodging itself deeply within her brain!

A bit dazed and bewildered Mr. Brotmann finally regained her composure and was amazed to realize there wasn't a mark on her face to show where the UFO had entered her cranium. Amazingly, after this incident Mr. Brotmann's I.Q. was greatly elevated and according Mr. Compton she is now an engineer (Type not specified!). (Would it be a stretch of skeptical speculation to point out that the "flag" slide and the "engineer" connection in Mrs. Brotmann's story seems to be a bit "American" Society of Mechanical and Electrical "Engineers" oriented.)

An obviously concerned middle-aged lady seated near the podium asked Mr. Compton if he had taken Mrs. Brotmann to the hospital to have x-rays taken of her head injury. Compton quickly replied, he had indeed wanted to do so but Mrs. Brotmann flatly refused treatment because of the voices in her head. Apparently, these were the voices of the (tiny?) UFO operators who did not want their presence revealed. Moreover, the x-rays would be lethal to the visiting Venusians who reportedly have been coming Earth since the dawning of mankind according to Mr. Compton.

This was the very first of the many so-called "Implant stories" I've heard of over the years. Compton dates the alleged incident to the early fifties. Naturally, I was quite shocked by the character of Mr. Compton's presentation and followed up with a rather capsulated talk on investigative methods employed at UFORIC. After this experience I decide to avoid public speaking engagements on UFOs and I rarely participated in radio talk show or

TV programming on the phenomenon. However, I did answer questions from the public over the phone at UFORIC because we were in fact, a UFO "Report" and "Information" Center. This permitted unfriendly UFOlogists to call and chastise me from time to time over abduction cases and crash stories I questioned. I will not to tell those stories at this time.

While the above may sound too bizarre to be factual, I can assure you it is indeed quite factual, and even stranger, wilder, yarns are presented at many UFO conferences and websites. So, is there any wonder why the real scientific community feels something is not quite right about these fringy UFO experts and the many saucer enthusiasts. Is there not a reason to suspect they avoid and ignore the subject for fear of being associated with the kooks and crackpots whom have always populated the largely unchecked and totally unregulated UFO subculture?!

Moreover, why is it if someone does question the validity of a reported incident, the UFO groups do not appreciate the individual's 'objectivity' and skeptical tenaciousness? Rather, they label him or her as an ideologue and debunker, while leaping to the defense of many less than credible eyewitnesses and fantasy prone self-proclaimed UFO experts bandying these ridiculous yarns about?

All this while serious UFOlogists have never proven UFOs actually exist in the physical sense of the word in over six decades of intensive inquiry by thousands of group members and field investigators. Not to mention, the combined efforts of hundreds of professional consultants of various disciplines such as aerodynamics, metallurgy, psychology, optics, astronomy, biology and atmospheric etc, etc.

Moreover, these same groups invite Abduction Experts. Implant Researchers and Reversed UFO Engineering promoters to their conferences to speak about aliens absorbing nutrients through their skin, telepathic communications from numerous benevolent alien races and the mass production of hybrid babies aboard colossal mother ships which are reportedly laden with human fetus' in liquid-filled jars. What utter nonsensical drive!!

What are we to think of these deluded folks who persistently inflict themselves and their half-baked theories and beliefs

upon the unsuspecting public, the all-to-eager UFO group members and the ratings-hungry media with "wild" and completely "bogus" UFO claims? What are we to think of 'so-called' serious research UFO group leaders who stand by and permit these same individuals to present their outlandish claims to their group membership? I actually came across a fellow (we'll call him Fred) who had achieved some degree of acclaim in UFO circles with his outrageous crashed saucer investigations, alleged MIB encounters and his own abduction report. Fred was actually an individual dealing with very serious mental health issues. Yet, his stories were posted by several experts on their popular websites.

Yet Fred, and the small group in which he is a key member have a growing internet following consisting of many young people who are Yahoo members, and quite a number of senior citizens, interested in the group's 'specialized' senior services, such as prayer groups for those with immediate spiritual, emotional and physical needs. (All at discount rates of course, for members.)

Additionally, Fred had proudly posted information about his own improving mental health status and active M.H. volunteer contributions on the internet for all to read along with his poetry. Yet, other UFO researchers continually posted his UFO stories and paranormal reports at their sites. Often thanking Fred for his 'Valuable contributions' to serious UFO researching. Fred was even the focus of an article in a leading European UFO magazine. Obviously, all had taken his reports at face value and never looked into the matter of his mental health issues and veracity before listing such hokum as credible UFO sighting reports and alien encounters.

I suppose a schizophrenic patient could have a reliable sighting experience, but, how would one be able to distinguish such a report as being factual versus its being a hallucinatory episode fueled by pathology like Fred's??

So, the question immediately arises, who is at fault here? The mental patient or, the shoddy UFO researcher's who post such potentially delusional material for UFO enthusiasts to read and readily accept as reliable data? Even the very best computer Virus Scans and Firewalls cannot

protect a serious researcher's UFO database from this sort of contamination. So, one can imagine the impact of such nonsense on the unsuspecting young UFO readers who assume the author is both knowledgeable and credible.

ON THE FOSSIL REMAINS OF MYTHICAL CREATURES AND ILL-FATED SAUCER PILOTS.

In a 1996 book about the discovery of many mythical creature fossils, a deceased Texan (said to be a paleontologist) is suspected of actually sculpting and otherwise fabricating the so-called skeletal remains of many mythical creatures. These included mermaids from both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, leprechauns, pixies and several other very creative works. Although the books titled clearly identified it as being about the discovery of "Mythical" creatures - one of the major UFO group leaders of the day was so captivated and intrigued by a photograph of the skeletal remains of a small creature imbedded in a concave plaster cast (Sort of like an alien on the half shell) he decided to personally investigate the matter.

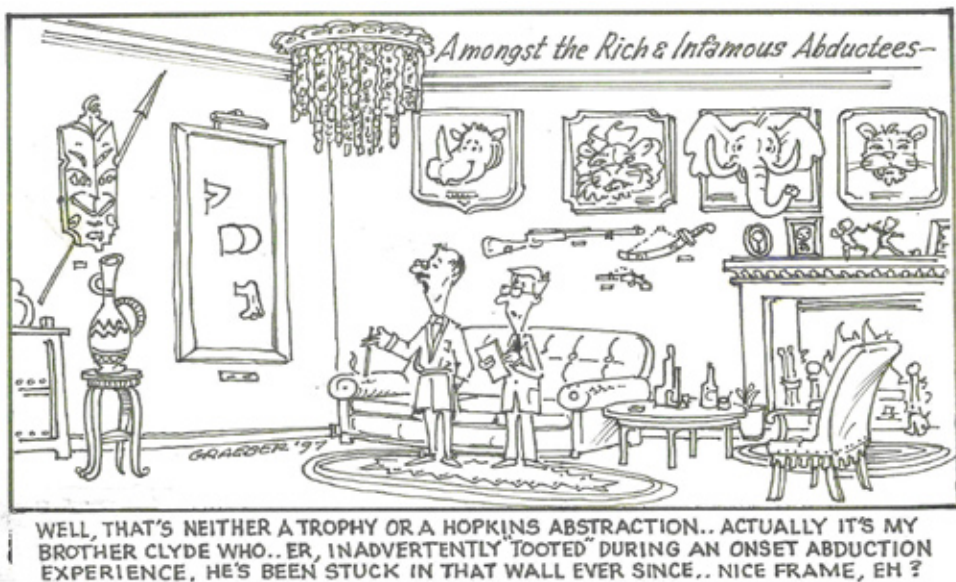
Because the UFO Group Leader thought the skeletal remains closely resembled those of an ill-fated saucer pilot who reportedly had crashed his space craft just prior to the turn of the 20th century near Aurora, Texas. Indeed, a UFO report involving the landing of two cigar-shaped objects at Ledonia, Texas was reported to have happened on April 16th 1897, while the Aurora crash (About a hundred miles away) was said to have occurred the following day. The fossil find story was cautiously but, favorably promoted in the UFO group's journal where it received wide attention by the membership. After all, if the group's leader thinks there's something to the story...well, there 'MUST' be something to it!

As time passed and the story started to unravel, the group leader decided to retire. (Albeit, without ever fully acknowledging he'd been mistaken about the significance of the bogus alien fossil discovery) Jim Moseley, editor of the zany UFO newsletter "Saucer Smear" had been gently chiding the "Czar" as he called the group leader about the bogus fossil, and I even drew a cartoon concerning the controversy which compared the fossilized remains to that of Warner Brother studio's cartoon character "Marvin the Martian" -

whom, as you may recall is actually Bugs Bunny's outer space nemesis.

The entire alien creature fossil affair reminded me of a time as a youngster, I first saw an authentic stuffed "Jackolope" at a hunting lodge. From what I later learned a creative taxidermist was producing the spoof-creatures (Jack-rabbits with small antlers) for fun-loving hunters who wanted to bamboozle their sons and younger, less-experienced sportsmen in their group. It's the hunter's equivalent of "Snipe Hunting" (Searching for a small speckled wingless bird) which young boy scouts at camp for the first time are subjected to as a kind of scouting rite of passage. They actually attempt to catch snipes in a burlap sack in the woods at night.

So if we find such "UFOology" flourishing at the very top of the heap in the sub cultural community of Saucerdom and dumber (take your pick!) One wonders, how much more contamination of the group's internet list exists - and the sharing of such tainted data with independent UFOologists may be staggering in scope (?) as many independent researchers look to these group lists for database resources. Hmmm, the answers may be out there some where, but, few are asking pointed questions! This is why a skeptical publication like Tim Printy's 'SUNlite' is a real breath of fresh air for inquiring minds.



The cat and mice game

Matthew Graeber

The last two parts of the 'Twenty-First Century UFOlogy' series have been devoted to an explanation of my thoughts on the UFO enigma. In this article, I am seeking your thoughts about an 'unresolved' case I had investigated many years ago.

"I'M WATCHING THE UFO AS WE SPEAK!"

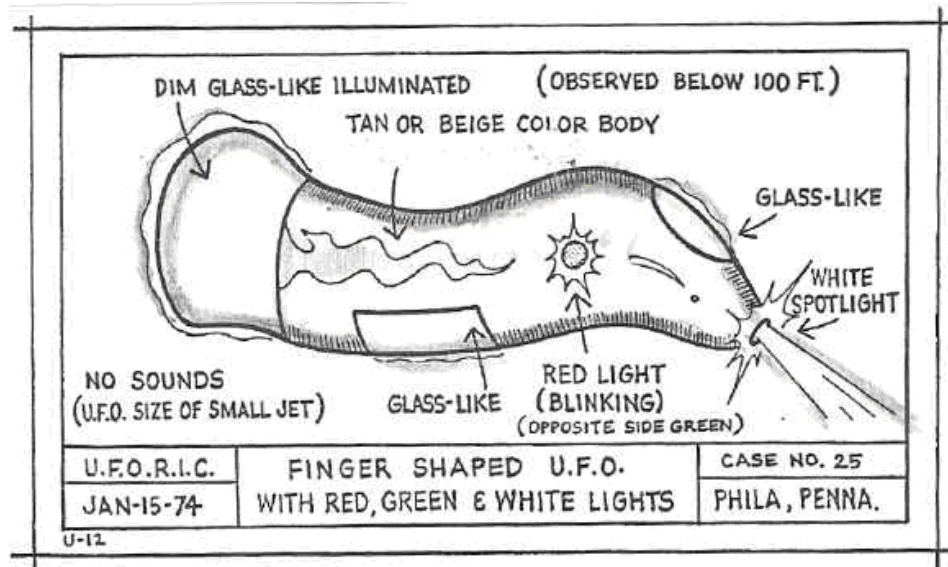
As I was enjoying a late dinner on the wintry night of January 15th, 1974, the phone rang and a very excited young fellow asked. "Is the place where you report seeing a UFO?" I replied it was and asked if he'd like to file a brief phone report and I'd happily send him a printed questionnaire (Report form) in the mail too. He exclaimed he was calling me be-

cause his sighting was still in progress - he was actually watching the UFO as we spoke.

Now, this had occurred in the days before cell phones and e-mails existed, however, it may be possible some folks had those big and terribly heavy portable car phones at the time. But, this young man (we'll call him Tim - age 23) was using a public pay phone while watching the distant lights of a low-flying and sporadically hovering UFO.

Tim told me the object was quite close to him at times, and would approach his car which he had parked at the edge of a harvested field to better observe the UFO. I asked how long he had been watching the object and he replied about twenty minutes" (except for the time he was attempting to phone his wife about the situation and had also used the pay phone to call information requesting the number of a UFO reporting center) In other words, Tim had been watching the UFO at the field from within his parked car, and observing the UFO's lights from the pay phone location while he was standing outside of his auto.

Tim said he wanted to get back to the field location because his wife (Sarah-age 22) and her parents, (Stan-age 52 and Kat-age 49) were on their way to join him. I quickly asked Tim the location of the incident, and informed Tim I was leaving to join him and his family. Since the loca-



tion was about 30-40 minutes away and I was uncertain of the area's networking of back streets, fields and dirt roads, I drove to the main intersection of the highway and picked up the primary street location before I started my search for the sighting location.

The sighting had reportedly taken place at a harvested agricultural property belonging to the Pennsylvania State (Berry) Mental Health Hospital - the area was not very well illuminated with street lighting at the time, and there were a number of smaller dirt roads crossing secondary streets. Signs were sparse and building numbers were just too distant to read in the darkness. I circled several times in various areas looking for the parked cars near a harvested corn field and/or the lights of an object above or slightly below the tree lines separating one field from another.

Fortunately, I had taken a teenage neighbor (Bill Kassner) along, and he assisted me with reading what street signs we did come across as we traversed the area without finding the group of observers.

When I unsuccessfully returned to my home, my wife (Grace) informed me Tim had called several times, telling her the UFO was actually approaching his family as they were parked, and when he would turn his auto's headlights on, the object would retreat back into the darkness. There were also times when the UFO would playfully blink back at the auto's headlights as if in response.

I didn't know what to think about the matter as I was returning home, but the possibility did cross my mind that this report may have been a hoax, or perhaps a misidentification of some kind which the observer had realized, but, was too embarrassed to talk about (?) But, if either of these suspicions were correct, why would Tim continue to call back requesting we send him a report forms for his family and possibly come to see them the following day?

Why would he request NO publicity about the incident and want his identity held in the strictest confidence? It all seemed to be very odd, and curiously sincere. If it were a hoax why would Tim involve his young pregnant wife and in-laws in it? Why would he subject them to the cold of a snowy wintry night and the hazard of driving on icy roads to join him in such

a prank?

I did meet with Tim and the family the following day at their home of his in-laws, and interviewed Tim separately from the others while he drove me to the location of the incident. I had passed it a couple of times when I tried to find it the night before. Tim's story was entirely consistent with the information I had gathered while writing the phone report and there was no variation or embellishment in the information I jotted down on the SIP Report (Sighting In Progress form) and the audio taped interview I had made with Tim while parked at the field.

I had a technique of using a three part cumulative report comparison technique while investigating sighting reports. First the initial phone report, second the written report form which was filed by the witness or, witnesses. Third, the audio taped interview report. This method was very helpful in detecting story changes, embellishments and omissions. It also afforded me some idea of the strength or weakness' of the reports.

SIP reports (though rarely audio taped, and usually made over the phone) were especially useful because the investigator could ask questions of the witness while the UFO event was allegedly going on. I decided to use the "SIP" or Sighting-In-Progress report method in this case because the incident had occurred the night before the interview, and was still very vivid in Tim's mind. It was written and audio taped at the location of the incident with the witness actually retracing his movements and describing the progression of events. This afforded me the opportunity to establish a time line for several observational portions of interest regarding Tim's UFO experience.

When I had completed the interview with Tim at the field, Tim and I returned to Stan and Kate's house where they and Sarah awaited our arrival. Each of them had completed filling out the UFORIC report forms I had left with them before going to the sighting location with Tim. I sat down at the kitchen table with them, turned on the tape recorder and asked several questions regarding their recollections of their UFO experience the night before.

They still seemed to be a little nervous about the whole thing, but, their story did not contradict or exceed the particu-

lars Tim had provided me with. He had called home and asked them to join him at the sighting location. He met them at an intersection and led them to the field. They all agreed a strange object was silently flying about very slowly and hovering in the area. They all told of how the object reacted to the auto's headlights, they even said they thought the UFO had struck the tops of the trees - Just as Tim had mentioned earlier.

I tried to determine the time line of their story and found things to be quite consistent and entirely plausible considering the location of their home and the location of the field. I drove the course and timed their travel allowing for quick conversation at their meeting place (an intersection of streets) and then, along the way to the field itself, it all worked out fine.

Now, I was really puzzled and no longer felt Tim and his family were hoaxing. I couldn't place a low flying fixed wing aircraft or helicopter over the field at the time of the incident (I had contacted a nearby privately owned airport and found no helicopters were aloft the night of the 15th, and there were no reports of any aircraft accidentally colliding with treetops).

I asked Tim (who was a student pilot and auto mechanic by trade) why he hadn't waited for me at the field the night before? He replied the UFO had flown away and his wife got cold from having her parent's auto windows down in an attempt to hear the UFO. Apparently, they had left the scene, and he drove around for a little while looking for me on those back roads. Tim decided it would be best to go back to the pay phone and call UFORIC again to let us know what had happened. After phoning, he drove home and called again (Tim and Sarah were residing with her parents at the time) and his story was consistent with the telephone messages my wife had given me.

While interviewing the family sitting around the kitchen table, I gathered their report forms and perused the pages as we talked. I noticed the UFO drawings which they provided were entirely unlike the UFO Tim had sketched. I had some limited experience at evaluating drawings of UFO-like objects which were observed at different angles and distances because I had previously performed 16mm film ex-



periments with youngsters at a couple of Philadelphia Elementary Schools.

In those experiments, I used a 16mm motion picture film strip of a model UFO hovering, descending and landing. The film was in full color and featured special effects (i.e., electrical arcing around the UFO) after viewing the two minute film, and after a short talk and slide presentation on the phenomenon (usually 15-20 minutes in duration) papers and crayons would be passed out and the kids would sketch and color the test film object as they remembered seeing it.

Some of the children's sketches were astonishingly accurate in general shape, detail and color of the test film UFO. While others were completely unlike the film strip UFO - even the color was incorrect quite often. Some of the drawings featured the electrical arcing while others did not. Some included aliens which were not seen in the test film, although, several alien sketches did appear in the later talk and slide presentation. At the time, I had mistakenly assumed the strangeness of the test film imagery would provoke and produce "enhanced memory and accurate depictions" of the test film object. But, it apparently did not! However, I think the talk and slides presented after the test film had influenced the

Children's' drawings quite dramatically, thus the influence of UFO books, periodicals and TV documentaries, etc. may taint recollection and cause some confusion about what was actually observed(?)

I had also made use of a "Surprise Test" while interviewing UFO witnesses, which involved the use of a flash card I had developed depicting a UFO. At some unsuspecting point during the interview, I would present it by saying, "Look, here's

a UFO!...I am going to ask you about it a little later on" with that said, I would put the card face down on the table and continue with the interview.

When the interview was completed, I would ask the witnesses to sketch the flash card UFO. Here again, the results were quite mixed but, the observers of the low-flying UFO at the state hospital grounds did remarkably well. The whole report was absolutely compelling and strange. The observers were believable and told consistent report narratives - their written reports matched, and my attempts to evaluate the sighting in terms of optical illusions caused by weather conditions (e.g., wind blown ice particles and/or swirling snow flakes illuminated by auto headlights seemed to be inadequate to explain all the report's strange elements).

But, there was one thing that turned my thinking completely upside down. Tim's UFO was a cylindrical object while his wife and her parents were certain it was a double convex disc-shaped object. To compound the discrepancy, their UFOs lighting placement and coloring didn't match Tim's UFO either. Additionally, Sarah and her parents were positive the UFO had a revolving rim, while Tim's UFO hadn't such a pronounced feature.

When I brought this discrepancy to the attention of the group they seemed to be genuinely surprised and dismayed about the whole thing. Tim simply couldn't believe they thought the UFO looked as they had sketched it. While Stan shook his head in disbelief at what his son-in-law thought the object looked like.

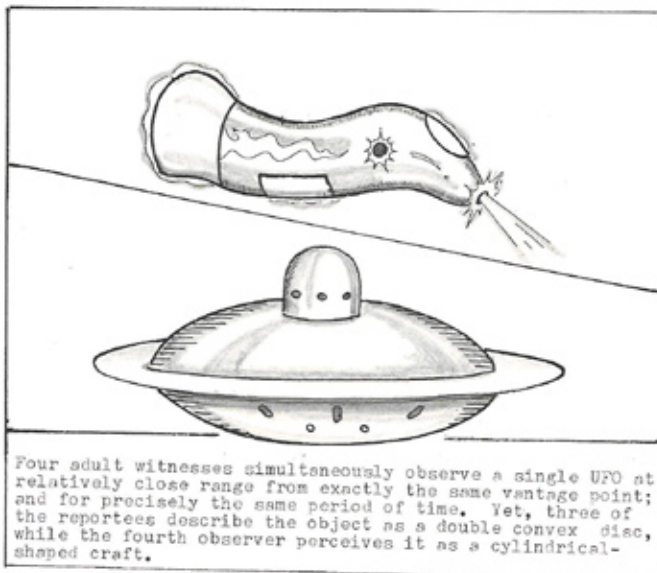
I had never encountered such a vast difference in a simultaneously observed multi-witnessed event. It seemed to me

that if the incident were a hoax, the hoaxers probably would have been able to tell the same story about what the object supposedly looked like. One would think that would be one of the first things they would discuss and agree upon. Yet, here it was in black and white, three of four observer's sketching a double-convex disk with a dome and revolving rim, and the fourth witness saying it was a cylindrical craft. Yet, all had observed the same UFO at relatively close range (50 yards being the closest estimate) with the aid of two automobile's high-beam headlights.

The observer's had no prior UFO sightings, had read about UFOs in the newspaper a couple of times, and even told me they watched a TV program about the phenomenon a couple of months prior to their sighting. I got the impression they hadn't more than a passing interest in the subject of UFOs, and their encounter had come as something of a surprise to each of them. All four witnesses had good eyesight, and only Stan wore glasses for reading. No one seemed to be color blind - as that was another test I performed with each of them. They did fine regarding identifying color cards I had brought along, and some confusion only appeared as they attempted to identify metallic colors like copper vs. gold, silver vs. aluminum and beryl. However, metallic colors were never mentioned in regard to the UFO they had reportedly observed

I returned to the sighting location to perform an in-depth field investigation, and discovered many branches of the trees were down in the area Tim pointed out regarding the UFOs apparent collision with the tree tops. An examination of the fallen branches revealed many of the trees were diseased and the downed branches were quite rotted and water logged. Thus, indicating that they had been on the ground for quite some time. There were many other branches lying about the area and I found nothing to indicate the limbs hadn't broken and fallen due to increased wind loads and/or the weight of accumulated ice and snow during very recent storms.

There was some snow still left on the ground in the area of the stand of trees and, I was unable to detect any branches that looked as if their bark had been recently impacted but, at one tree I did discover rather recent damage and what appeared to be bark missing on part of a



large fallen limb. I didn't find any glass, metal fragments, plastics or paint on the damaged tree or the limb, and there was nothing unusual lying on the ground. I had pondered the possibility swirling wind-borne snow or ice particles may have played a part in the event, if Tim's headlights were reflected off the swirling mass and created the optical illusion of a revolving rim on the object...but, that was a purely speculative reach on my part and little more.

It seemed swirling ice or snow couldn't create the multi-colored lighting of the UFO, nor could it account for the UFO's cat and mouse reactions to the auto's off and on again headlights. The apparent timing of the UFO's reaction to Tim's head lamp signals seemed to show intelligence and volition on both the observer's and the objects part. The repetition of the cat and mouse activity seemed to show anticipation, intent and playfulness rather than misinterpreted coincidence caused by automobile head lamp reflections. Or, was this too a speculative reach on my part?

Since I had gone just about as far as I could with rudimentary physical and optical aspects of the case, I requested the family's permission to delve a little further into the possibility there may have been some sort of psychological factor involved in the event. At first, Sarah and Tim agreed to the idea but, he later recanted and I was unable to look for indicators of Dynamic Display in the matter (If any existed?) However, I later learned Tim and Sarah were not actually married at the time of their UFO sighting. So, the

starkly differing object shapes in the reports may have had some sort of Archetypal (Symbolic) significance?

Generally speaking, UFO witnesses would be cooperative with our investigators and UFORIC's three-part investigative research process, but, when the subject of psychology came up many terminated their participation. I think they felt their personal life was not part of a random encounter with a UFO, and to imply it might have been was often felt to be an insult of some kind. Of course, I wasn't attempting to insult or, discredit them because a psychological factor may have existed. I just wanted to learn 'IF' one might have existed.

I later discovered when I used the term "Psychical factor" the witnesses reaction to my requests were far more favorable. In other words, the word psychological seemed to bear the stamp of infirmity such as a neurosis, psychosis, etc. While the word 'Psychical' tended to be perceived as form of enhanced mental ability.

Quite often when the psychical question came up during the interviews, and an array of paranormal experiences were discussed. Some of the incidents involved the UFO witnesses while others involved family members and friends. There wasn't a common experience in the data collected but, some involved premonitions, ghost or spirit tappings and vague gut-

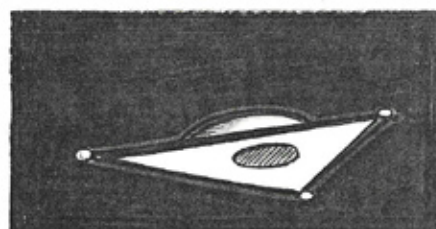
feelings something unusual was about to happen and did come to pass.

The paranormal experiences reported tended to involve single witnesses and did not appear to have a multi-witnessed character. There were many incidents which may have simply been coincidental in nature, while others were obviously imaginings. Yet, some seemed to have a very personal meaning to the reporting parties. Over the course of my investigations I discovered many folks felt UFO encounters and paranormal happenings are linked in some unexplained way - as opposed to being purely random and unrelated events - This is but one of the many curious sociological factors which appeared in the interview data. So too, no two UFOs were found to be identical during eight years of investigation. Like snowflakes they were similar objects, but, they were also of dissimilar shape, size and coloration.

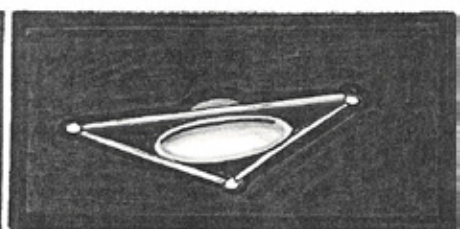
So there you have it, the case remains "UNKNOWN" and I'm not certain if I was tricked by tricksters or, IF they had tricked themselves (?) If two UFOs (whatever they may have been) were flitting about that cold N/E Philadelphia corn field I remain unaware of it, and Tim may have been terribly mistaken about what he thought he was seeing? I had handled cases were two or more observers sketched the UFO a bit differently, and I was able to determine that in some instances one person had placed certain portions of the object in the foreground of their sketch, while the other observer had placed the same sections of the UFO in the background of their sketch. The observation of a tri-lighted Triangular UFO reportedly encountered at Lionville, Pa. is a good example of this common perceptual fluke.

I have presented my reader's with a sam-

Two young adults report observing a triangular-shaped disc at close range. However, each describes the UFO's configuration in starkly contrasting ways.



The male witness says the object appeared as a solid triangle with a hatch on its underside and a dome on top.



The female witness reports the object as a circular disc with a triangular bumper-like protrusion surrounding the object

pling of a possible true unknown, at least in regard to what I had encountered in the field while investigating UFO reports back in the 70's, 80's and 90's.

If anything, I've attempted to illustrate the phenomenon is not as uniform in character and appearance as many experts would have you believe it is. There is some uniformity in the general tone and character of the reports (i.e., people are saying they are seeing strange objects in the sky.) But, we must keep in mind the fact that in most instances both the observers and the UFO proponent investigators are favoring the ET Visitations Hypotheses as a causal factor for these reported occurrences and this tends to slant and color their findings and assumptions.

So, one must be prepared to attempt to separate the wants, needs, desires, beliefs, assumptions and fantasy-prone aspirations of both the witnesses and the investigators from the basic elements of the reported observation itself. It's not enough to simply ask questions of the witnesses, one is also obliged to ask those questions without tipping the witness off in regard to what the investigator may desire to hear.

I have taken the position the UFO experience is the observer's encounter with the unknown - and it really doesn't matter what the researcher's (Pro or Con) think of the experience - it's much more a matter of how that sudden, shocking and unsuspected encounter was perceived by the witnesses - How it may have affected them on both conscious and subconscious levels of their being. (e.g., how the experience impacted their model of the real world and their place within it).

Thus, Twenty First Century researching techniques like those employed by Tim Printy, Bruce Hutchinson and Win Van Utrecht will serve to broaden the depth and scope of our inquiries. They are well on the path to a better understanding of the UFO enigma - despite all the muddy waters of silly assumption, ignorance and the will-to-believe just about anything the self-appointed saucer experts might utter.

If one cannot determine 'what' a UFO is. It is refreshing to establish what it 'may' have been and bolster such reasoning up with reliable hard data.

My True UFO Story

Major Michael Hoza, U.S.C.A.P.

This is a true story of a UFO sighting over Arizona in the mid-1990's. I offer the story for those that are on both sides of the UFO issue.

My name is Michael Hoza. I am a certified private pilot with 2100 flying hours in both civilian and military aircraft.

Over the long Thanksgiving weekend in 1994, I had an opportunity to fly a Cessna 152 from my home airport of Glendale Arizona (GEU) to Bullhead City Arizona (IFP). Bullhead City airport is located on the Colorado River, just across from Laughlin Nevada. Laughlin is known for its gambling casinos and shopping. I was going to spend the day playing the slot machines.

The trip to Laughlin takes one over some of the most desolate areas of Arizona. The trip in the slow Cessna 152 takes just under 2 hours to complete. My story begins just before I started my decent into the Colorado River Valley, and into Bullhead City Airport.

The Colorado River cuts a deep valley into the desert at the tri-state area. I had to clear the mountain range to the east of the river at an altitude of 8500 feet. As I crested the range, I noticed something out ahead of me, at the same altitude. Since the plane was so slow (90 knots is slow for aircraft), I was not approaching the object at a fast rate. I could make out the shape of the object as I neared it, once again, at the same altitude that I was flying.

The object appeared not to be moving, as it was stationary in my windshield. This is a clue to the attentive pilot that the object was converging on my ship. As I neared the object, I could make out the shape. It was a perfect cube! This panicked me as I then had no idea what this object could be. I was able to see that the cube was rotating, and it had what looked like a gold and red window on one side. The closer I came to the object, the more frightened I became. This was not any aircraft, balloon or helicopter that I could identify. This was a UFO.

Nearing the object, I quickly took action to avoid any possibility of a collision. I kicked in rudder and left aileron



and watched as the object passed off my right side. As I passed the object, I lifted the wing to see the window of the object facing me. I then realized what I was dealing with. It said "Burger King"! What I could not identify was a fast food bag that was caught in a thermal, up over the mountains at almost 9000 feet.

Although I now know that the object was a simple bag, I was unsure of the identification for a matter of about 20 seconds. If I had not seen the writing on the bag, I would swear to this day that I saw a UFO. And for that matter, for a period of about 30 seconds, it was a UFO.

Even the best trained eye, looking into the vastness of the sky, is unable to identify even the most common of objects. Once you put an object in a place that you would never expect it to be, it becomes almost impossible to identify, no less gauge its speed, size and origin. Here in Arizona, it is common to see object in the air, such as soda cups and plastic garbage bags.

My skepticism of the UFO craze comes from the unscientific method used by some "experts" to explain what they cannot. Until the UFO community puts together a rational process in their attempts to identify aerial objects, they will continue to be marginalized as scientists. If I can be upset over a paper bag with all my flying experience, imagine the errors that non-pilots make every day in attempts to explain that which is out of place in the sky.



E-mails to the editor

An open letter from Matt Graeber

I just wanted to drop each of you a line to explain that I am not a rabid conspiracy minded person, suspicious by nature or, dark, cunning and sinister. As an objective UFOlogist who has learned to consider the 'possible' ulterior motives of the pro-UFO experts and enthusiasts over the years, I have come to think and behave this way in order to defend history from various agenda-driven, deluded rewrites - While protecting the character and reputations of persons who have been wrongly assailed by the UFOOLogists. I also confess to not forgetting about the maintenance of my own sanity during this decades-long struggle.

To be sure, not all pro-UFOlogists are complete fools - some are quite well-educated and write much better than I. Some are remarkable wordsmiths and make very good points from time to time. One contemporary pro-UFOlogical icon spent six years in a four year college to hone his literary and thinking skills which he occasionally wields like a rapier against his own list followers. Or, they all may gang up on one of the weaker intellects of the fold like piranhas during a feeding frenzy - Then, the sage icon steps in and gently admonishes everyone for their poor behavior...It is a S.O.P. I have seen unfold over and over again.

Then, we have the complete idiots of UFOOLOGY, who nevertheless manage to attract a following and promote themselves quite effectively. It should be noted that these individuals can work an unsuspecting and enthusiastic saucer crowd like a con artist with a master's degree from the Silas Newton University of double-speak and fraud. I could list many examples of this but, what would be the point?

While it is true I have been assailed by several of these former associates and friends, my message to you is not directed at them personally. For I now realize they suffer from the same infectious malaise which had once invaded my own mind. They see me as a 'Turn Coat' and one who "Has over to the other side." I have even been labeled "A debunker from way back!" Because I dared to ques-

tion and seek common sense answers as things spun out of control at saucer group meetings. Yes, "Objectivity" is their chief enemy and all who embrace it are their foes.

Never under estimate the degree of deceit and deception the UFOOLogists are willing to employ to make their deluded points! Remember too, they are not making these points directly for skeptics, they are made to re-enforce their self-appointed status in UFOlogy amongst UFO believers and the ratings-hungry media. Skeptics and their arguments are but an annoying saddle burr they encounter along their merry ride!

Skeptics are held in ill-regard and ridicule in Saucerdom. They are seen as evil-doers and very short-sighted ideologues. They are the Infidels in the holy land of Roswell and refuse to fast or, remove their shoes from upon their feet before treading upon the sacred crash site soil. Skeptics may not be redeemable souls!

One saucer expert even suggested that if I were to seek the Miraculous Memory Metal with the aid of a sighted friend at the Foster property, my sight might be restored... Need I say anything more?

Matt

Editor: *Matt's comments come from his many years of involvement with UFOs. I can only add that I can see why he becomes frustrated with many in the field of UFOlogy.*

More memories of Phil

Am I ever so glad you picked up Phil's baton and doing SUNLite.

It recalls the time I invited Phil to town to speak to our astronomy club in a joint effort with the BC Skeptics. To make a long story short, it was one of the most memorable meetings we ever had. The meeting started at 7pm, and ended at 11 only because the cleaning crew kicked us out!

Phil took on all comers, and there were more than a few because he put in an appearance on one of the local TV news broadcasts plugging his talk. He kept asking for evidence to back up their claims and they kept shooting back that he was either closed minded or a tool of the [insert organization here].

If he wasn't an AvWeek writer, he may have been able to make a living as a stand up comedian.



I miss him a lot but I sure have some great memories. When I told him I read his book on spy satellites "Secret Sentries in Space" I was very surprised a few weeks later when a copy arrived in my mailbox which he'd autographed for me.

Barry

Editor: *It is always interesting to hear stories of "Uncle Phil" as some have called him. As much as many in UFOlogy hated him for his stance on the subject, I think some in UFOlogy probably miss their favorite devil.*

From the other side of the fence

I like your newsletter. I don't always agree with it but you do a good job of challenging those of us who are interested in the subject. There is nothing wrong with that.

Bill

I downloaded the first two copies of your newsletter, Sun Lite, with intention of reading and learning. I read the first issue and about two thirds of the second issue until my brain told me I was wasting my time. The second issue was pretty much the same as the first issue and I imagine the twentieth issue, if it ever comes out, will be the same.

John

Editor: *I appreciate Bill's comment and encourage others to maintain a skeptical view of anything they find in my newsletter or elsewhere on the dreaded Internet. For John, I have opened my newsletter to other authors for fresh points of view in order to prevent it from becoming stale. Peter Merlin's article this month is very interesting. You will also find Matt Graeber's experiences quite refreshing compared to mine. Stay tuned for more articles by other authors.*

UFOs on the tube

I know what I saw...

I dislike titles like this. It sounds like that whatever was seen has been shown to be exactly what the witness described. This is latest James Fox UFO epic that was broadcast on the History channel to kick off their fall schedule. Apparently, UFOs do better than actual history.

Fox spends a great deal of time rehashing old cases that have very plausible explanations by trotting out the witnesses as emotional appeal to trust these honest people. He misses the point that skeptics do not state they did not see anything but they are arguing about how the witnesses interpret what they saw. He concludes the program with the statement that the witnesses want to know what they saw. The problem with that is they do not want to know what they really saw! They want to hear people agree with their interpretation of what they saw. That is why they flock to Fox and his films. It feeds their desire to believe in the fantastic.

I could go through each case and demonstrate the flawed observations and gross misrepresentations here but I decided to put them in a separate article so people can read the other side of the coin. Fox is in this film professing to search for the truth. However he completely obliterates it time and time again. He distorts why the USAF/DIA/CIA investigated UFO cases after Bluebook closed down in order to make everyone think there is a secret organization out there investigating UFO sightings. Fox also completely misrepresented many of the cases on the program (see page 4). Looking at just these points, we can see that Fox has no desire to report everything and he certainly is not interested in discovering what these people may have seen.

Probably the funniest thing I saw during the film was disgraced ex-Arizona governor Fyfe Symington demanding a new version of project BLUEBOOK! It is no big surprise that he has found a forum to reinvent himself in the public eye. My guess is Symington desires this UFO program to be a civilian organization with maybe himself in charge. Gee, a politician wanting taxpayers to waste their money on

his own personal boondoggle. If SETI, which involves real scientists, could not get funding from the government, how do you think a UFO program would sell in congress? Symington probably knows this is not only unlikely but next to impossible. As a skilled politician, he knows what he really is doing is trying to keep himself in the public eye somehow. The instant he finds some political backers or an opportunity to run for office, he will leave UFOlogy in the dust and never mention it again.

Other notables were present in the film. British UFO superhero, Nick Pope made his standard implication that he was in charge of the MODs UFO program. Last issue's article by Colonel Moulder demonstrated that is not quite accurate. Pope proclaimed the MOD files talk about all these "structured craft" have been seen by "reliable" witnesses. I wish they would have shown just part of Dr. Clarke's on line videos. They probably would have made Pope look like an idiot.

What UFO proponents don't want everybody to know is that the disclosure of UFO documents has been happening for a long time in every country including the US. To date, not one document has shown that aliens are visiting the earth and/or some governments are conducting a cover-up. If there was a real cover-up that has existed over sixty years with presidents/politicians having no knowledge of it, what makes Fox think he is going to convince them to reveal the truth?

I don't think that Fox is really interested in the truth. He seems more interested in perpetuating the mystery to sell his videos and make a buck off of UFOs. His emotional appeal to believe these people because "they would not lie" is just using these people to accomplish his goal.

The program gets a thumbs down simply because it did not present any alternate hypothesis or scientific opinions outside the UFO field. It is too bad that the History channel was not more discriminating in what they present. I am just ticked off because I wasted two hours of my time watching this.

Book Reviews

Buy it! (No UFO library should do without it)

The Demon Haunted world - Carl Sagan.

I was never that big a Sagan fan when he was most popular. I just did not really enjoy watching him on TV. However, in the late 1990s I happened to pick up this book and read it. Sagan explains the importance of scientific thinking when it comes to the paranormal world. If you want to understand how to look at exotic claims from a scientist's point of view, this book will do nicely.

Borrow it. (Worth checking out of library or borrowing from a friend)

The scientific study of Unidentified Flying Objects - Dr. Edward Condon et. al.

- This book is well worth reading with lots of useful information and insight into how many events that can be confused as UFOs. I personally enjoy Dr. Hartmann's section on perception issues. I bought my book used but it's wear has increased over the years. I would put it in the "buy it" column but it is hard to locate copies. However, it can be read on line at several locations. If you have never read it, I suggest you go to the site above and do so. It is a wealth of information.

Bin it! (Not worth the paper it is written upon - send to recycle bin)

Top Secret/Majic - Stanton Friedman.

I am not sure what one can learn from this book other than that Stanton Friedman likes to talk about his theories on Roswell and MJ-12. I have to wonder what I was thinking when I bought this book. I guess I had money to burn and I was trying to give Mr. Friedman another chance. When he suggested that the invention of the transistor had to do with Roswell, I threw up my hands in disgust. Why must every invention/discovery by intelligent people be attributed to little green/gray men who supposedly crashed in the New Mexico desert? With this kind of writing and wild speculation I realized this book was a waste of my money as well as the time I spent reading it.